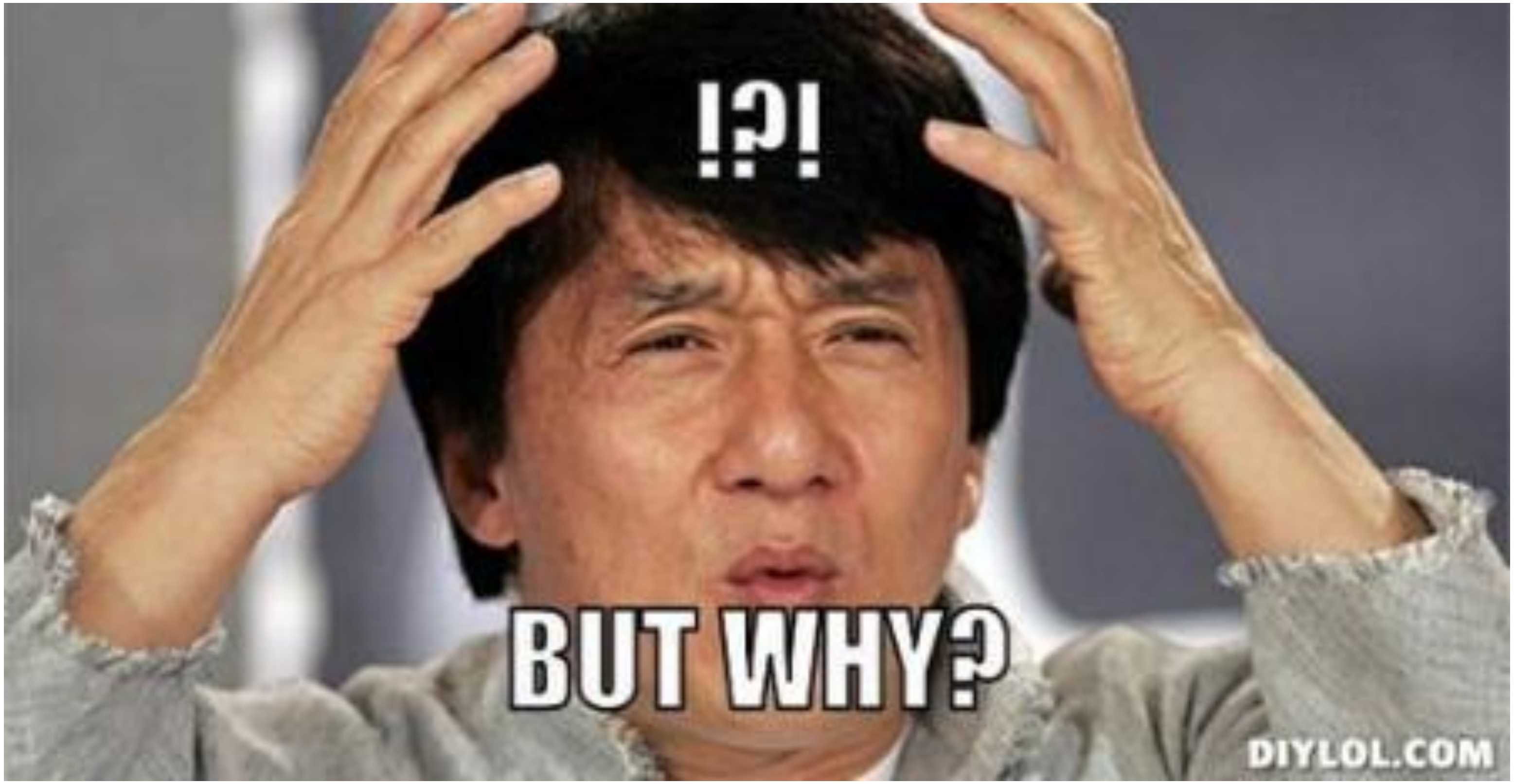
Foundation of Human Skills

Ms. Neha Nikam

What is FHS??


ATTRACT
REWARD
EDUCATE
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT
EMPOWER
TRAiN
MOTiVATE


!?!
BUT WHY?
DIYLOL.COM

Unit I: Understanding of Human Nature

Concept of a MAN!!

- A social animal. Lives in a society. He cannot work, survive or live in a society in **isolation**. Society plays a vital role in his development.



Individual Differences



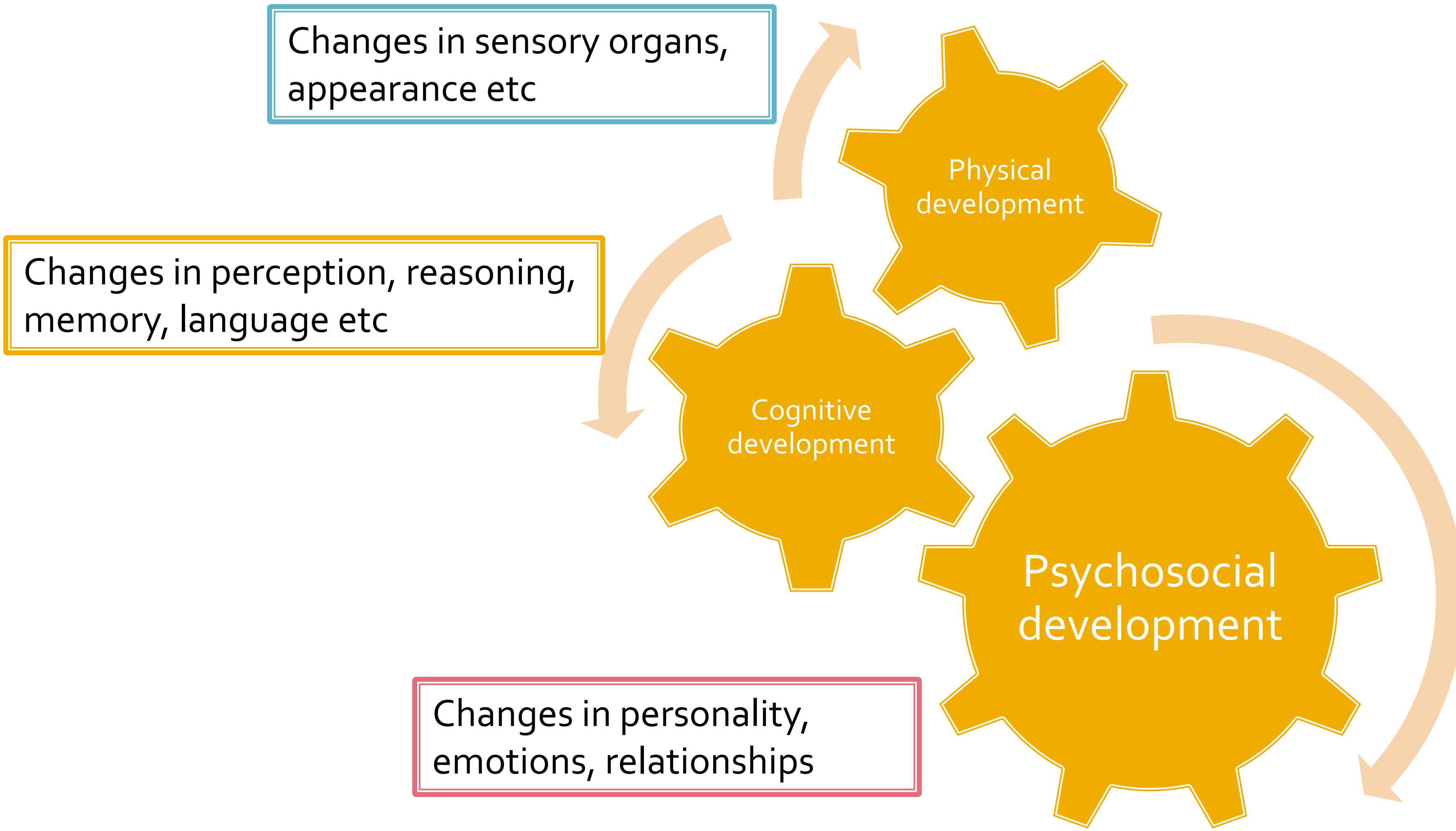
Two types of individual differences

- Inter-individual differences
  - Differences that exist between one person and another
  - With regards to their physical characteristics, intelligence, abilities, interests etc.
- Intra-individual differences
  - They are differences among the various characteristics possessed by the same person
  - A person may be very good in singing but average in acting

Areas of individual differences

- Differences in physique
- Differences in intelligence
- Differences in ability
- Differences in aptitudes
- Differences in interests
- Differences in achievement
- Differences in personality

Human life span



Human life span

- Prenatal stage--- period from conception to birth
- Infancy and toddlerhood--- from birth to age of 3
- Early childhood--- between 3 to 6 years
- Middle childhood--- age of 6 to age of 11
- Adolescence--- age of 12 to age of 20
- Young adulthood--- age of 20 to age of 40
- Middle age--- between 40 to 65 years
- Late adulthood--- 65 years onwards

FACTORS AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE

Environmental factors
- Economic environment
- Change in technology
- Political factors
- Cultural factors

Personal factors
- Age, Gender
- Abilities, Experience
- Marital status
- Education

Psychological factors
- Personality, Attitude
- Values
- Learning
- Thinking

Organizational factors
- Facilities
- Reward system
- Leadership stages

Influence of environment



Phases	The role of environment
1) Prenatal	
2) Postnatal	

Prenatal environment

- Prenatal nourishment: A well balanced daily diet includes- meat and meat alternatives (for proteins), dairy products, bread and cereals, fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C, green vegetables and fats and oils.
  - Intake 300 to 500 more calories than usual
  - Should gain between 26 to 35 pounds
- Maternal drug intake medicines, alcohol, smoking etc.)
- Maternal illness
- Radiations: should be avoided especially during first 3 months
- Maternal age
- Paternal factors

Postnatal environment

- Parent-child relationship
- Ordinal position (birth order)
- Family life patterns
- School: *first exposure to the external world!!*
- Peers group
- Culture

Personality

" *The **unique** and **relatively stable** patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and emotions shown by individuals*."

-Baron and Greenberg

Determinants of personality

HEREDITY

" *The transmission (transfer) of biological characters from parents to their off springs (children)."*

-G. J. Mendel

The Big Five Model

- **Robert McCrae** and **Paul Costa** developed the Five-Factor Model, or FFM, which describes personality in terms of five broad factors.
- The basis of this model is that there are five basic dimensions that form the basis of all other personality dimensions.

The five basic dimensions are:



Openness (↑Creative ↓Traditional)

People who are high on the openness continuum are typically:

- Very creative
- Open to trying new things
- Focused on tackling new challenges
- Happy to think about abstract concepts

Those who are low on this trait:

- Dislike change
- Do not enjoy new things
- Resist new ideas
- Not very imaginative
- Dislikes abstract or theoretical concepts

Conscientiousness (↑Organized ↓Unreliable)

Those who are high on the conscientiousness continuum also tend to:

- Spend time preparing
- Finish important tasks right away
- Pay attention to details
- Enjoy having a set schedule

People who are low in this trait tend to:

- Dislike structure and schedules
- Make messes and not take care of things
- Fail to return things or put them back where they belong
- Procrastinate important tasks
- Fail to complete the things they are supposed to do

Extraversion (↑Social ↓Introvert)

People who rate high on extraversion tend to:

- Enjoy being the center of attention
- Like to start conversations
- Enjoy meeting new people
- Have a wide social circle of friends and acquaintances
- Find it easy to make new friends
- Feel energized when they are around other people
- Say things before they think about them

People who rate low on extraversion tend to:

- Prefer solitude
- Feel exhausted when they have to socialize a lot
- Find it difficult to start conversations
- Dislike making small talk
- Carefully think things through before they speak
- Dislike being the center of attention

Agreeableness (↑ Cooperative ↓ Selfish/manipulative)

People who are high in the trait of agreeableness tend to:

- Altruistic
- Have a great deal of interest in other people
- Care about others
- Feel empathy and concern for other people
- Enjoy helping and contributing to the happiness of other people

Those who are low in this trait tend to:

- Take little interest in others
- Don't care about how other people feel
- Have little interest in other people's problems
- Insult and belittle others

Neuroticism (↑Moody/ depressed ↓ Calm)

Individuals who are high in neuroticism tend to:

- Experience a lot of stress
- Worry about many different things
- Get upset easily
- Experience dramatic shifts in mood
- Feel anxious

Those who are low in this trait are typically:

- Emotionally stable
- Deal well with stress
- Rarely feel sad or depressed
- Don't worry much
- Very relaxed

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Authoritarianism: demanding strict obedience of authority and rules
  - Conventionalism/ Authoritarian submission/ Authoritarian anger/ Superstition/ Dominating
  - Two types of people, strong and weak
  - 'The world would be a better place if strong people were the leaders and weak were followers'
  - Prefer stable and structured work environment

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Locus of control: if an individual control events or events control him
  - Two types of people, internals and externals
  - Internals believe that they can control events
  - Individuals with external locus of control have high absenteeism rates, are less involved in their jobs

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Machiavellianism: Pragmatic, Rational
  - Deceive and manipulate others for personal gain
  - Maintain emotional distance, persuade others more
  - Lie to achieve their goals
  - Have high self esteem
  - Better in bargaining

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Introversion and Extroversion
- Achievement orientation: working towards excellence
  - Never fully satisfied
  - Set higher standards
  - Take calculated risks to overcome challenges
  - People who LACK achievement orientation like to work in their comfort zone

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Self esteem: sense of self worth
  - People with HIGH self esteem take more risks and choose unconventional jobs and have favorable evaluation of themselves
- Self monitors: to adjust his behavior to external situational factors
  - HIGH self monitors show considerable adaptability and hence pay more attention to the behavior of others
  - Concerned about how they are perceived

Personality traits important for organizational behavior

- Risk taking: high risk takers are quick decision makers with the help of less information
- Type A and B personalities:
  - Type A people are impatient, eats rapidly, obsessed with numbers
  - Strive to think or do two or more things at a time
  - Cannot cope with leisure

Concept of understanding self through Johari Windows

A Johari window is a psychological tool created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955. It's a simple and useful tool for understanding and training:

- self-awareness
- personal development
- improving communications
- interpersonal relationships
- group dynamics
- team development; and
- inter group relationships

It is one of the few tools out there that has an emphasis on **"soft skills"** such as behaviour, empathy, co-operation, inter group development and interpersonal development.

Johari Window

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to Others	Open area or Arena	Blind spot
Not known to Others	Hidden area or façade	Unknown

Attitudes

A predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation.

"Attitudes are evaluative statements or judgments concerning objects, people or events."

Features of attitude

Attitude!? Everyone has it..about everything

- Feelings and beliefs of one or more individual
- Beliefs that are directed towards some stimuli
- Attitudes result in behavior or action
- Types: positive, negative or ambivalent
- Difficult to change
- Strong influencer

Components of attitude

- Affective or emotional component
- Behavioral component
- Cognitive or informational component

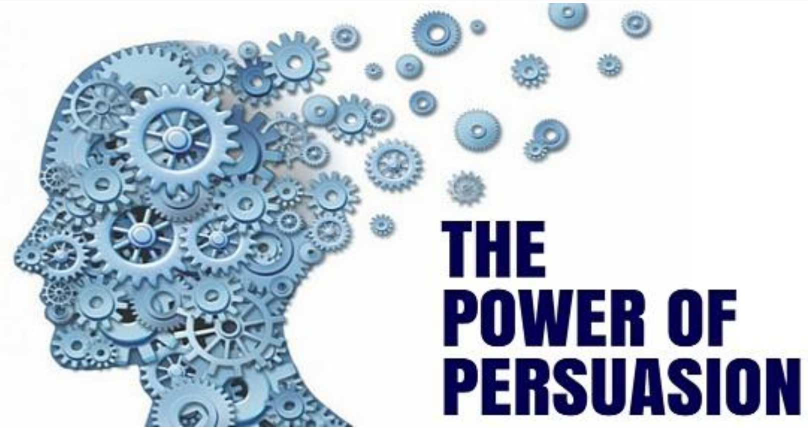
Functions of attitudes

- Knowledge function
- Value expressive function
- Self esteem function
- Ego defensive function
- Impression motivation function

Ways of changing attitude









Co-opting approach

Friends



Reading emotions

- ASK
- Observe non verbal SIGNS
- PARALANGUAGE

Thinking and learning

Thinking

"Thinking is a ***deliberate exploration*** *of experience for a purpose that purpose may be understanding, decision solving, judgement, action and so on."*

-Edward de Bono

Thinking skills

Thinking skills are a set of basic and advanced skills and sub skills that govern a person's mental processes they are as follows:

- Focusing skills: ignore information that is irrelevant.

Types:- Identifying problems

-Setting goals

Thinking skills

- Information gathering skills: Collect relative information needed for thinking.
  - Types: -Observing

    -Forming questions
- Remembering skills: Store and bring back information when needed.
  - Types: -Encoding
  - -Recalling

Thinking skills

- Organizing skills: Arrangement of information
  - Types:- Comparing

    - Classifying
    - Ordering
    - Representing

Thinking skills

- Analyzing skills: Examine information into parts and relationships.
  - Types:- Identifying features and components
    - identifying relationships and patterns
    - identifying main ideas
    - Identifying arguments

Thinking skills

- Generating skills: produce new information or ideas.
  - Types:- Inferring –Predicting –Elaborating
- Integrating skills: Connect and combine information.
  - Types:- Summarizing –restructuring
- Evaluating skills: judge the reasonableness of ideas.
  - Types: -Establishing standard

    -Verifying

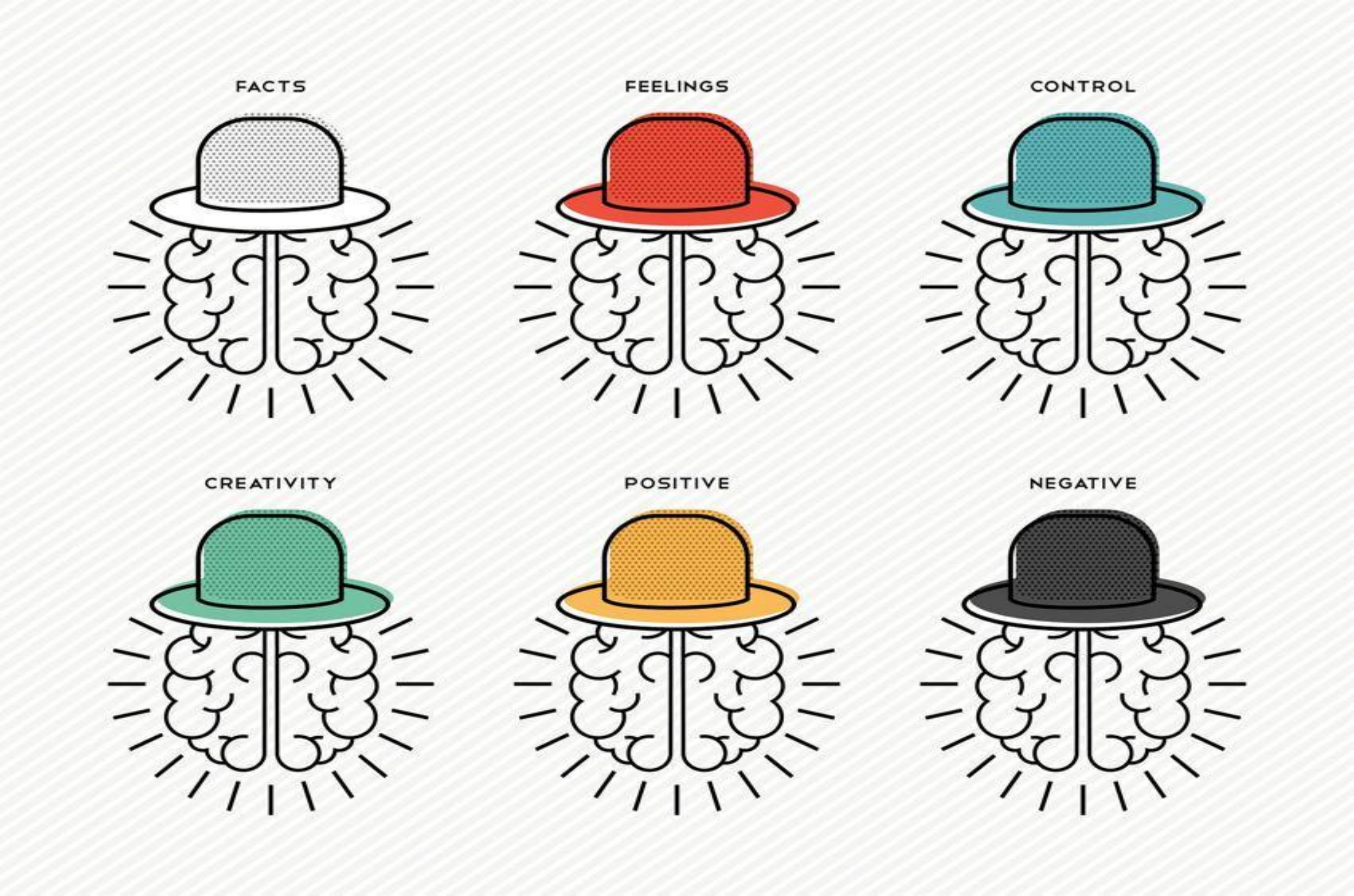
SIX THINKING HATS

- Six Thinking Hats was created by Edward de Bono, and published in his 1985 book of the same name.

"Six Thinking Hats" can help you to look at problems from different perspectives, but one at a time, to avoid confusion from too many angles crowding your thinking.

- It's also a powerful decision-checking technique in group situations, as everyone explores the situation from each perspective at the same time.

SIX THINKING HATS



SIX THINKING HATS

COLOURED HAT	THINK OF	DETAILED DESCRIPTION
	***White paper***	The white hat is about data and information. It is used to record information that is currently available and to identify further information that may be needed.
	***Fire and warmth***	The red hat is associated with feelings, intuition, and emotion. The red hat allows people to put forward feelings without justification or prejudice.
	***Sunshine***	The yellow hat is for a positive view of things. It looks for benefits in a situation. This hat encourages a positive view even in people who are always critical.
	***A stern judge***	The black hat relates to caution. It is used for critical judgement. Sometimes it is easy to overuse the black hat.
	***Vegetation and rich growth***	The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas. This is your creative thinking cap.
	***The sky and overview***	The blue hat is about process control. It is used for thinking about thinking. The blue hat asks for summaries, conclusions and decisions.

Thinking Styles

- Synthesists:
  - **Creative thinkers**, who view the world in terms of opposites.
  - Take risks and **like changes**
  - They are **not easily convinced**
  - They like to have a control
  - Do things in a big way
  - Encourage **intellectual arguments**
  - They don't like facts based discussions
  - They question a lot
  - Guesswork is the tool!

They can open up new ideas
They can opt out any time

Thinking Styles

- Realists:
  - They are fast moving doers, corrective and **result oriented.**
  - They work on the **basis of facts** and believe that facts should not be influenced by personal factors
  - They rely on experts some times
  - They are optimistic, frank and positive
  - They like to have a **number of projects at once**
  - They don't like dull and humourless talks
  - Their work is based on observation rather than theory

They can achieve concrete results
They have low tolerance for ambiguity

Thinking Styles

- Pragmatists:
  - They are energetic and smart, appear restless and are unpredictable
  - They like to **plan things**, strategies
  - They are frank and friendly
  - They are experimental and good diplomats

They are tolerant to ambiguous situations
They agree quickly with others

Thinking Styles

- Analyst thinkers
  - They like to **gather information** and measure it scientifically to have better results or solutions
  - They like stability
  - They like **logical evaluations** and discussion
  - They do not multi-task
  - They may be too time consuming

They help us to look a problem from various perspective
They search for more data

Thinking Styles

- Idealists:
  - They are future oriented and **goal oriented**
  - They are **helpful** and believe in importance of truth, faith and trust
  - They **try hard** to convince people
  - They like discussions about values, judgements and emotions.
  - They discourage conflicts

They encourage group participation
They avoid setting goals and standards

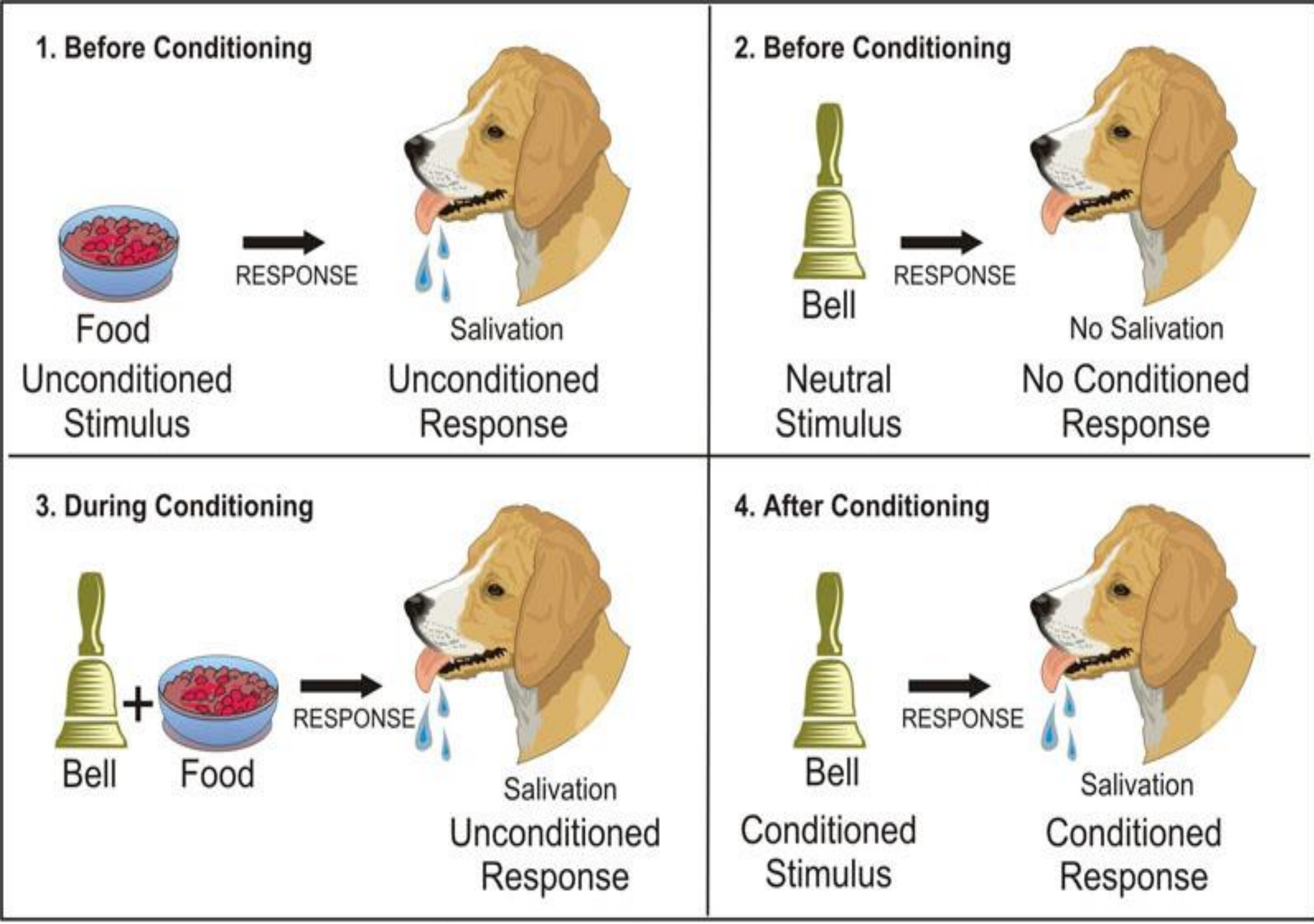
Managerial skills

- Planning
- Conceptual skills
- Decision making skills
- Technical skills
- Leadership skills
- Supervisory skills

Theories of learning

Classical conditioning

- The **Classical Conditioning Theory** was proposed by a Russian Physiologist Ivan Pavlov. According to this **theory**, behavior is learnt by a repetitive association between the response and the stimulus.
- **Conditioned** Response (CR): a particular behavior that an organism learns to produce, when the CS is presented.



Classical Conditioning

Theories of learning

Operant conditioning

- Developed by **B. F. Skinner**, Operant conditioning is a method of learning that occurs through **rewards and punishments** for behavior.
- Through operant conditioning, an individual makes an association between a particular behavior and a consequence

Theories of learning

Social learning/ observation learning

- Proposed by **Bandura**, Social learning theory is a form of learning in which individuals acquire new behaviours or thoughts by observing others.
- Four processes of social learning
  - Attention process
  - Retention
  - Reproduction
  - Reinforcement (reward)

Intelligence

"Intelligence is the ***capacity*** *of an organism to adjust to an increasingly difficult environment."*

- Spencer

Types

- Intelligence quotient:
  - The Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is just the measure of intelligence and it is independent on self-assessed levels of happiness.
  - Intelligence can simply be defined as; doing the right thing, at the right time, at the right place. This requires us to be able to manage both our internal environment (us) and external Environment (what surrounds us). It is more than just knowing things.

Types

- Emotional quotient:
  - Managing emotions is more important than managing your intellect.
  - Research done by tracking over 160 high performing individuals from different industries and job levels shows, emotional intelligence was two times more important in contributing to excellence than intellect and expertise alone.

Types

- Spiritual quotient:
  - The intelligence needed for you to ask the most critical questions is what you need. Why should I react this way? Is it necessary to get in a fight? What am I going to get out of it? The intelligence required to ask most fundamental and basic questions in life and seek answers is called Spiritual Intelligence or Spiritual Quotient (SQ).
  - The personality of the human being is guided by the 3 needs; the need of body, the need of mind and the need of intellect. *The power to control the three is called intelligence, Spiritual Quotient (SQ)*

Perception

"A process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment"

Features of perception

- Perception is our sensory experience of the world around us
- Perception is composed of six processes
  - Receiving stimuli
  - Selecting
  - Organizing
  - Interpreting
  - Checking
  - Reaction
- Perception is influenced by three factors:
  - Characteristics of the perceiver, target, situation

Effects of perceptual error in managerial decision making at workplace

- **Selective perception**
- **Halo Effect**: An individual draws a general opinion either favourable or unfavourable on the basis of a single characteristic of the target.
- **Stereotyping**: Judging on the basis of features of the group of the individual.
- **Prejudice**: a preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience
- **Attribution**: Attribution refers to judging the causes of other peoples behavior

Groups and teams!!

Why do people join groups??

Security
Status
Self esteem
Affiliation
Power
Goal achievement

Group structure (elements)

- Formal leadership
- Roles
  - Role conflicts
  - Role expectations
  - Role ambiguity
- Norms
- Status
- Size
- Composition
- Group cohesiveness

Stages of group development

- Forming: Getting acquainted. This stage is over when members start thinking being the part of the group.
- Storming: High degree of conflict
- Norming: Close relationship. Agrees to find solutions mutually
- Performing
- Adjourning

Types of teams

- Problem solving
- Work teams (routine work)
- Management teams (permanent)
- Cross functional teams
- Virtual teams

Setting team goals

- Aligned
- Understood
- SMART
- Identifying risks
- Commitment by members

Power

"Power is the ability to make things happen in the way individual wants, either by self or subordinates. The essence of power is control the behaviour of others"

Bases of power

- Formal power
  - Legitimate power: positional power
  - Coercive power: used by threats and punishments
  - Reward power
  - Information power
- Informal or personal power
  - Expert power
  - Referent power: An individual develops reference power when other individual’s like and respect him

Motivation at workplace

"Motivation is the set of processes that arouse, ***direct*** *and maintain human behaviour towards* ***attaining some goal****."*

-McFarland

Features of motivation

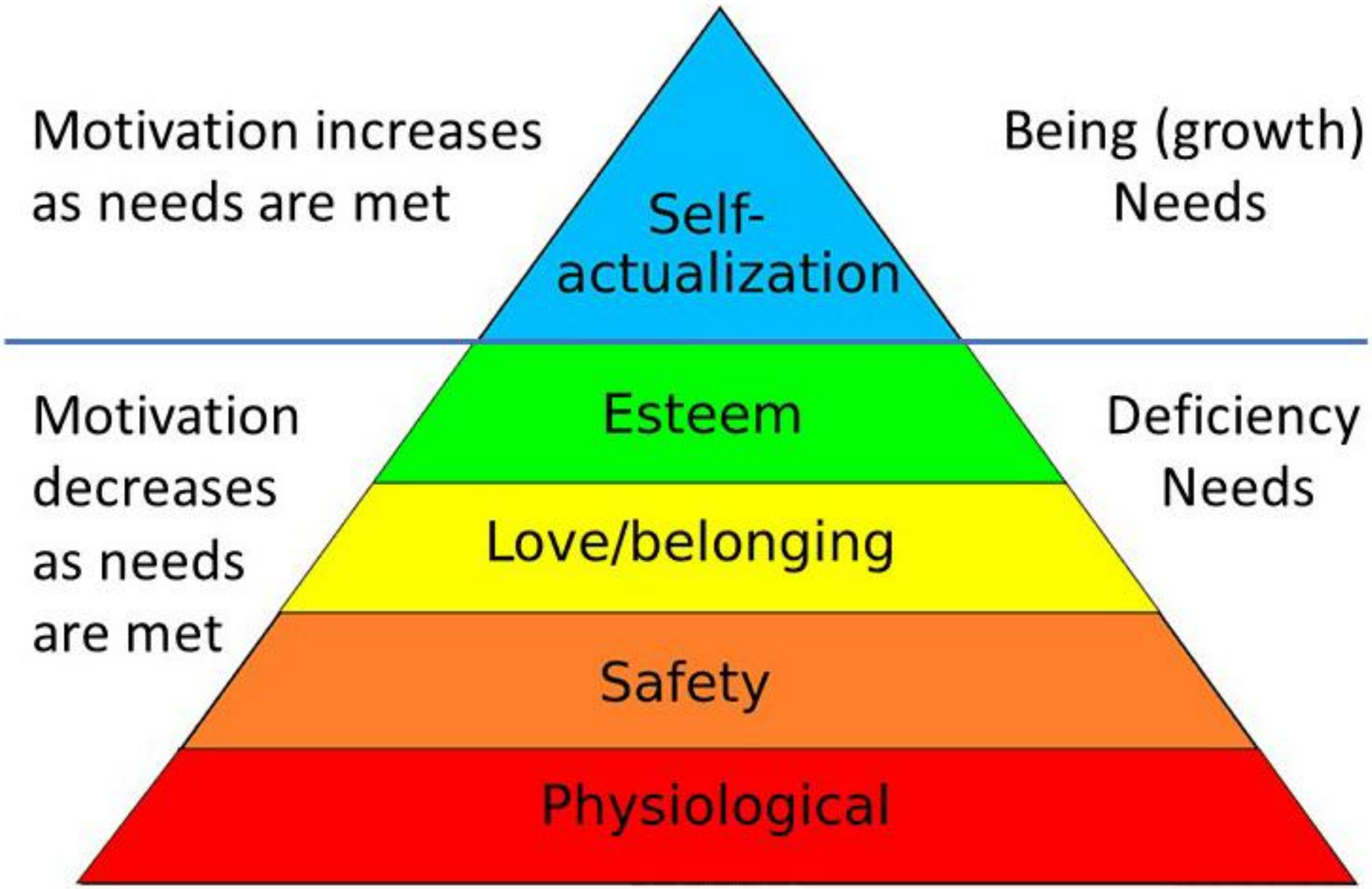
- An internal feeling
- A person can’t be satisfied in parts
- Complex process
- Related to satisfaction
- Goal directed behaviour

Role of motivation

- High performance level
- Low employee turnover
- Acceptance of organisational changes

Theories of motivation




Motivation increases
as needs are met
Self-
actualization
Being (growth)
Needs
Motivation
decreases
as needs
are met
Esteem
Love/belonging
Safety
Physiological
Deficiency
Needs

Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

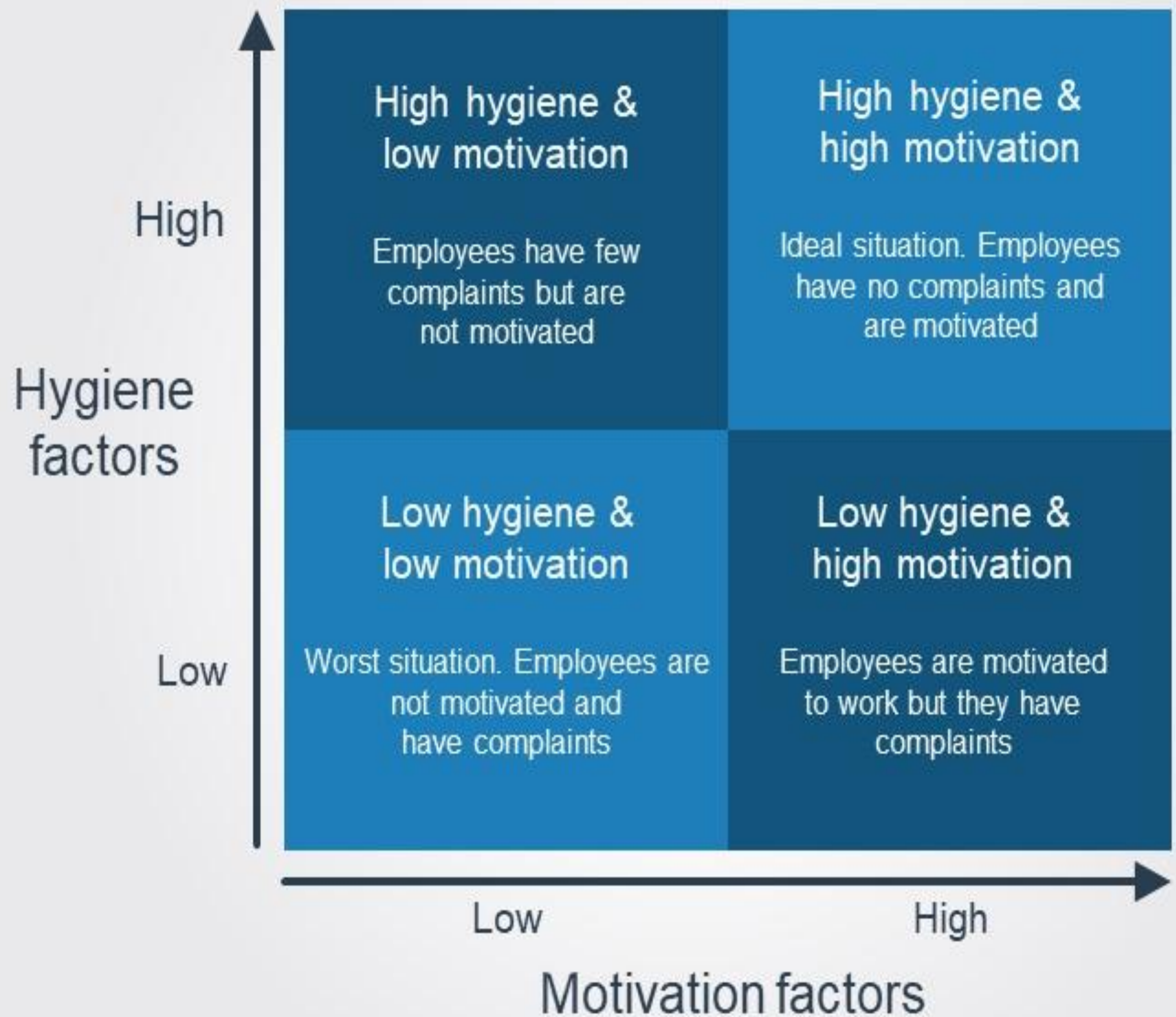
- Also called as **Motivation-Hygiene Theory or the dual-factor theory**, was penned by Frederick Herzberg in 1959.
- This American psychologis was very interested in people's motivation and job satisfaction
- He conducted his research by asking a group of people about their **good and bad experiences at work**.
- He was surprised that the group answered questions about their good experiences very differently from the ones about their bad experiences.

- Based on this, he developed the theory that people's job satisfaction depends on two kinds of factors. **Factors for satisfaction (motivators/satisfiers) and factors for dissatisfaction (hygiene factors/ dissatisfiers).**

Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory



Read more: www.toolshero.com


High hygiene &
low motivation
Employees have few complaints but are not motivated
High hygiene &
high motivation
Ideal situation. Employees have no complaints and are motivated
Low hygiene &
low motivation
Worst situation. Employees are not motivated and have complaints
Low hygiene &
high motivation
Employees are motivated to work but they have complaints
High
Low
Hygiene factors
Low
High
Motivation factors

Theory X and Theory Y Understanding People's Motivations

What do you think motivates your people to come to work each morning?

- Theory X and Theory Y were first explained by McGregor in his book, 'The Human Side of Enterprise,' and they refer to two styles of management – authoritarian (Theory X) and participative (Theory Y).

Theory X

- Theory X managers tend to take a pessimistic view of their people, and assume that they are naturally unmotivated and dislike work.
- As a result, they think that team members need to be prompted, rewarded or punished constantly to make sure that they complete their tasks.

Theory X

This style of management assumes that workers:

- Dislike their work.
- Avoid responsibility and need constant direction.
- Have to be controlled, forced and threatened to deliver work.
- Need to be supervised at every step.
- Have no incentive to work or ambition, and therefore need to be enticed by rewards to achieve goals.

Theory Y

- Theory Y managers have an optimistic, positive opinion of their people, and they use a decentralized, participative management style. This encourages a more collaborative, trust based relationship between managers and their team members.

- People have greater responsibility, and managers encourage them to develop their skills and suggest improvements. Appraisals are regular.

Theory Y

- This style of management assumes that workers are:
- Happy to work on their own initiative.
- More involved in decision making.
- Self-motivated to complete their tasks.
- Seek and accept responsibility, and need little direction.
- View work as fulfilling and challenging.
- Solve problems creatively and imaginatively.

Organisational change

Kurt Lewin's Model: Guiding change through a three step process

1. Unfreezing
2. Moving
3. Refreezing

Organisational development (OD) and Work stress

- OD concentrates on people dimensions like norms, values, attitudes, relationships, organisational climate etc.

OD methods

- Sensitivity training
- Survey feedback
- Action research
- Process consultation
- Team building
- Quality of work Life (QWL) projects

CHAPTER

8

12136CH08

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this section the learner will be able to:

- understand the significance and scope of guidance and counselling
- explain the basic concepts in guidance and counselling
- have basic understanding and knowledge required for guidance and counselling as a profession.

SIGNIFICANCE

Every human being comes across challenges and stress that must be faced. Sometimes, we feel the need for assistance and support to manage the problems and find solutions. Traditionally, in India, such support was readily and easily available through the family, particularly the joint or extended family, and the strong social network. Besides these, moral and emotional support was also available from teachers, friends and spiritual/religious mentors. In the present, particularly urban, context there is an increasing speed in the pace of life, fragmentation of family and socio-religious support systems, and competitiveness. All such factors have led to a greater need for assistance to help individuals cope with their problems. Consequently, the field of guidance and counselling has evolved into a professional area.

You may reflect that when you last experienced a problem, if you were able to speak about it with someone whom you trusted, you felt better. The person whom you confided in may have suggested certain steps to handle the problem, which you may not have thought of. Sometimes the listener is able to guide you to look inwards and find solutions. In this manner, sharing one's troubles with a trusted person can help the individual feel more capable of facing a situation. This is because seeking guidance from others enables a person to examine the situation from various perspectives and find appropriate solutions.

You may have seen or heard of people facing different types of challenging situations. A friend may be upset with her poor grades in examinations, a youth may be disturbed because his parents often quarrel with each other, another person may be having difficulty with friends, some one else may have financial problems. Many students on the threshold of college may be confused about choices to be made for further studies and such other issues. They are perhaps in situations which they are unable to deal with by themselves. Here they would benefit from professional guidance and counselling. These are processes that help people when they feel that they are in a challenging situation and cannot find a way to cope with it.

Sandeep has appeared for the medical entrance examinations for the last two years. He feels that if he doesn't become a doctor, life isn't worth living. He has an artistic bent of mind, can paint very well and is very creative. He could do well in a field which involves creative and artistic/aesthetic activity. But in the medical exams he faces repeated failure, experiences lack of confidence and a feeling of inferiority.

Radha is a resident of a village. Despite the larger family's disapproval, her father sent her for senior secondary schooling to an adjacent village. The young man to whom she is engaged has a shop in the village. He often comes to visit her. Of late he has been insisting that she goes out with him to a park. Radha is in two minds. She likes the young man but is afraid of what people would say. Her mind is in turmoil and there is no one to whom she can turn for advice.

The above two instances depict the kind of challenges that young people may face. In a survey conducted by the All India Educational and Vocational Guidance Association for assessing college students' needs, major problems reported by 50 per cent of the respondents were:

- gap between expectations and performance,
- lack of knowledge regarding careers and professions,
- anxiety regarding the future,
- lack of concentration,
- inability to make friends or deal with members of the opposite sex,
- lack of knowledge regarding sexual matters,
- lack of information regarding one's strengths and weakness,
- lack of knowledge regarding one's aptitude and abilities,
- lack of resources,
- lack of knowledge of effective learning strategies,
- inability to forgive oneself for past mistakes.

The findings clearly indicate the need for professionals in the field of guidance and counselling.

Activity 1

Make a list of problems you have faced recently, where you would have felt much better after speaking with somebody about it. From the list, categorise the problems in following categories. Personal/ Social/ Academic, You need not disclose or share the problems with others if you do not wish to.

Note to the teacher: Please ensure that students do not feel compelled to share intimate difficulties, other wise it can create more problems for students among the peer group.

Let us examine the duties and roles of professionals in Guidance and Counselling.

Basic Concepts

Guidance can be explained as assistance made available by competent counsellors to an individual of any group to help him/her direct the life course, develop a point of view, make decisions and be better adjusted. Guidance does not mean giving directions, nor is it an imposition of one's point of view on another person. The person, who is guiding another does not take the onus (responsibility) of making decisions on behalf of the client. We can see that guidance is more about assisting people to find their way rather than giving instructions or ready made solutions.

Counselling is an interactive learning process in which the counsellor (sometimes termed therapist), helps the counsellees (those seeking help) to understand the cause(s) of difficulties and guides them to sort out issues and reach decisions. The approach in counselling is holistic, addressing social, cultural, economic and emotional issues. Counselling can be sought at any time in life, although many people reach out only in times of change or crisis. The qualified professional counsellor speaks with the counsellee in a way to help that person solve a problem or helps to create conditions that will cause the person to understand and improve life circumstances.

Counselling may be concerned with addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, improving relationships and developing personal awareness. It also involves working with feelings, thoughts, perceptions and conflicts. The overall aim is to provide counsellees with opportunities to work in positive ways so as to live with essence of well being as individuals and as members of the larger society.

Activity 2

Refer Boxes given on page 157 where the two young persons' problems are described.

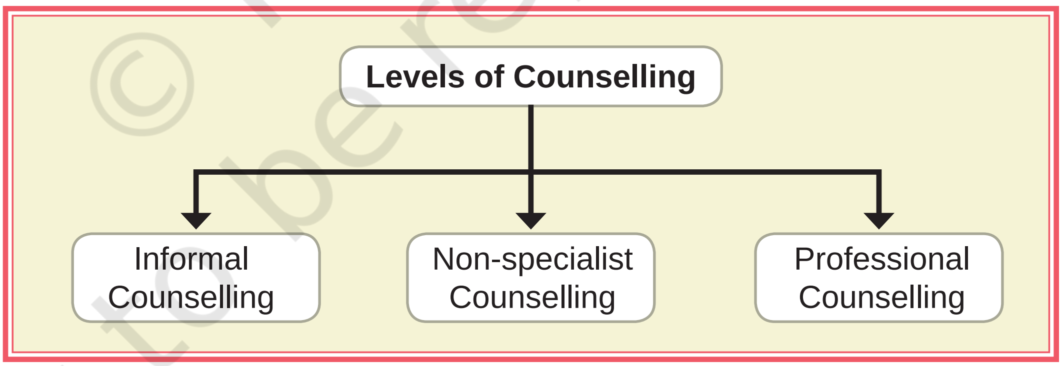
Discuss with your classmates the nature of their problems. Enumerate the solutions that you think would be best for them.

Counselling is a process involving responsibility and confidentiality. Therefore, guidance and counselling experts have to follow certain ethical principles. Counsellors must:

- Act with care and respect for individual and cultural differences and the diversity of human experiences,
- Must never take any step which is likely to harm the counsellee in any way,
- Respect the confidence with which the counsellee places trust in them by not talking about their issues with other people,
- Encourage the counsellee to increase self understanding,
- Help the counsellee to increase and discover a range of choices and alternatives for handling the crisis situations effectively
- Practice within the scope of their competence and refer cases that may need more intensive therapy to experts who are trained to deal with these
- Be aware of all the services available for people in difficult circumstances so that adequate guidance can be provided in case further referral is required.

Levels of Counselling: In day-to-day life you may have noticed that the term counselling is being used informally to refer to any kind of information-seeking interaction including appraisal of a person for careers. It may be useful to understand that there are different levels of counselling as shown in the box given below.

Informal Counselling: It is generally rendered by a person who may be approachable and understanding, but may not be professionally qualified. This empathetic person could be an aunt, uncle, friend or colleague.



Non Specialist Counselling: It is the help provided by specialists of other areas like teachers, doctors, lawyers, religious preachers who, along with their respective specialisation, also wish to handle psychological problems. They try to provide alternative ways of dealing with the problems of people they come across in their daily interactions at work.

Professional Counselling: Professional counsellors are the ones who have received special training in counselling and have the required

qualifications. These counsellors deal with the person's social, emotional and personal problems. In the counselling process, the professional counsellor may use different techniques. Let us briefly discuss three techniques.

How the counsellor deals with the counsellee is based on the mode of approach and the techniques the counsellor uses. These are divided into:

- *Directive, counsellor-centred counselling*: Here the counsellor plays a major role and does all that is possible to get the counsellee to make decisions in keeping with diagnosis of the problem.
- *Non-Directive or permissive or client-centred counselling*: Here the counsellor's role is comparatively passive. The counsellee takes an active part in the process of therapy. The person seeking help is encouraged to gain insight into the problem with the help of the counsellor. The counsellee takes the final decisions. Thus, this counselling process turns out to be a growth experience for the person.
- *Eclectic counselling:* Counsellors who advocate using this type of counselling are of the view that directed or non-directed counselling are at two ends of continuum. And counsellors should incorporate suitable techniques from both the types of counselling mentioned above as and when required, depending on the situation, the problem and the temperament of the client.

Preparing for a Career

If you recall the times when you received help and guidance you may have noticed that the listeners, whether they were teachers, friends or another adult, had certain qualities in them that made you approach them easily.

Qualities of counsellor:

1. Sensitive to human problems
2. Empathy
3. Respect for individual variations
4. Being non-judgemental
5. Maintain confidentiality
6. Being approachable
7. Being firm yet friendly
8. Pleasant disposition
9. Understanding values and relationships

These qualities have to be combined with specific skills that the profession demands. These are listening skills, analytical skills and good observation skills. A counsellor must possess the skill of working with individuals as well as groups.

The fact that counselling is basically meant for people with some sort of difficulty, makes it essential for the counsellor to have a disposition as well as empathy towards people apart from being professionally qualified.

Having these qualities alone is not sufficient to become a professional counsellor. One must undergo special training to acquire the necessary skills. Professional counsellors usually hold a masters' degree in Human Development or Child Development/ Psychology of Education, along with at least a post graduate diploma/degree in Counselling. During the course, the trainees receive supervised practical training under trained Psychologists or Counsellors as practical training is essential for developing the skills of a counsellor. In India many reputed Universities and Institutes offer these diplomas. After M.A. or M.Sc. one could also undertake further research and obtain a Ph.D. degree. Professional counsellors hold a certificate and are registered with a professional body which grants licences for practising.

ACTIVITY 3

Match the phrases in column B with counsellors, qualities in column A and enter the correct combination in column C

A	B	C
1. Sensitivity to human problems	a. I agree with you, but please do not hit your child again.	
2. Empathy (ability to empathise)	b. Just because he is poor it does not mean Ravi would have stolen the money.	
3. Respect for individual variations	c. It is normal of people to have personal problems.	
4. Being non-judgemental	d. She seems to be cheating on her parents but I must keep it to myself.	4b
5. Maintaining confidentiality	e. When I heard her story my eyes filled with tears.	
6. Being approachable	f. Hello, how are you? Would you like to talk to me about something?	
7. Being firm yet friendly	g. Different people respond differently to similar problems in their life.	

SCOPE

In your Class XI textbook of HEFS you had studied about life span development. You must have noticed how at each stage there are challenges that an individual must meet and resolve. Each stage of development has specific characteristics as well as certain developmental tasks to be achieved. Assistance and guidance can be a requirement at any stage. For this purpose, it is required for counsellors to be specially trained in the developmental needs and characteristics of individuals at a particular age.

Career Avenues

Career Counsellors: Some counsellors work with people of all ages for vocational and career counselling.

School Counsellors: Schooling can also bring about adjustment problems for children. A child may have problems with academic achievement, with peers or with parents. Counsellors who deal with such difficulties are called school counsellors.

Family Counsellors: They are specialists who work with parents, children and other family members. They deal with specific issues that arise due to conflicts between family members or between generations. They also deal with behaviour problems of individual family members.

Marriage Counsellors: They deal with different issues or problems related to marriage, counselling for marital and before marriage issues, or for personal compatibility, close relationships and counselling for couples.

Life Skills Trainer: These days many people may need assistance in the course of everyday life on account of stress at home or the workplace. For instance, a well adjusted young person may want to become proactive to optimise his or her potential.

Counsellors for Child Guidance: Some counsellors work with children and are called child guidance counsellors.

Key Terms

Guidance, counselling, counsellee, counsellor, stress, coping strategies.

Review Questions

1. What do you understand by the term guidance and counselling?
2. What are some of the important principles of counselling?
3. What are some of the common difficulties that students of your age can have that may require counselling?
4. What are the different types of counselling?
5. How can one prepare for a career in guidance and counselling?

Practical 1

Theme: Conducting mock sessions in Guidance and Counselling

Tasks:
1. Preparing students for role play
2. Role-play as counsellor and cousellee
3. Discussion of qualities of counsellor

Purpose: You have learnt about principles of guidance and counselling in this chapter. This practical will give you the experience of being in the seat of a counsellor and the person who receives assistance (counsellee).

Conducting the Practical

Students should form pairs and take the role of either a counsellee or a counsellor after selecting any one issue. They should enact a mock (imaginary) session while teacher and other classmates are observing. The session should be discussed keeping in mind what you have learnt about qualities of a counsellor.

(a) Career Guidance: A Class X boy wants to take commerce stream but his parents insist on his taking up the science stream. The student has come for help from you.

(b) Nutrition Counselling: Parents complain to you that their 5-year-old child does not eat anything other than maggi noodles.

(c) Personal Counselling: A 14 year old comes for help saying he/she is unable to make friends.

UNIT 3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Structure

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- define guidance and counselling;
- explain the principles of guidance and counselling;
- differentiate between guidance and counselling;
- list out the stages of educational guidance;
- describe the areas of counselling;
- explain the phases/steps in counselling process; and
- identify the attributes of a good counsellor.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of guidance has emerged many years ago and it is as old as human civilization. In earlier times, guidance was offered to the young people by elders in the family and the family priest gave guidance to those in distress. This practice

continues even today, in India, where people acquire guidance from the family priest, significant elders in the family, palmist, astrologer or numerologist in personal, educational, vocational or political matters. Guidance, as an organized professional activity, dates back to 1905 and this is because of the work of Frank Parsons, Boston, USA. Author of the classic *'Choosing a Vocation'* and his efforts to help find the *Vocation Bureau*, made him a pioneer in the guidance movement in America. Various social reformers followed Pearson and contributed to the guidance movement. In India, guidance as an organized professional activity is more than four decades old.

From the beginning we find that more experienced persons have been guiding less experienced or inexperience persons. However, guidance at that time was limited and life was also simple as compared to today. Due to the complexities in present day lives, guidance has become an integral component for better adjustment and this has called for specialized persons to give guidance and thus has helped individuals to adjust to social realities and live happy lives. Guidance - unorganized and informal existed in all places and at all levels and has been a vital aspect in various spheres especially in the educational scenario.

In unit-1 and 2 of this Block you have read about the role of 'Life Skills for Personality Development' and 'Communicating with Adolescents'. In this unit, we will be emphasizing on guidance and counselling, the need for it and discussing about the difference between guidance and counselling. Studying the types of guidance and counselling and exploring the steps in counselling process will also be dealt with.

While reading through the unit you will come across activities and check your progress questions, which will help you to keep track of what you have learnt in the unit.

3.2 CONCEPT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

To begin with, we will take a look at the meaning of the terms 'guidance' and 'counselling' and its need and importance. Next we will discuss the principles of guidance and the difference between guidance and counselling. The term guidance and counselling is being used in different context and can mean anything from informal advice that is often given to close friends to formal counselling undertaken by specially trained professionals.

3.2.1 Definition and Meaning of Guidance

The introduction would have given you an idea when and how the guidance movement started. Let us understand the meaning of guidance. Guidance means to guide or direct or to lead. Guidance is the assistance given to an individual to help him, to adjust to himself, to others and to his own environment. In this way guidance is a process of all-round development.

In the post-independent period, **Indian Government, set up Indian Education Commission** (1964-66) who has defined "**Guidance is a help to the students in making possible adjustment to the situations in the educational institutions and in the home and at the same time facilitates the development of all aspects of the personality**".

Guidance aims to prepare an individual for his future life.

Guidance is required at various stages of our development, right from birth till the end, so that we can deal with life events. Guidance is needed most when the individual enters the period of adolescence. The adolescent has to face various challenges in the area of education, vocation, health, and personal life. If proper guidance is given at this stage, his further development will be facilitated.

> **Activity 1**
>
> At any point of time have you approached an elder in your family or teacher asking for guidance? If so, recall the incident and how was the experience?

3.2.2 Definition and Meaning of Counselling

Counselling has been understood and defined in a number of ways.

According to **Cormier and Hackney (1987)** counselling is defined as the "helping relationship that includes –

a) someone seeking help,

b) someone willing to give help who is capable or trained to help,

c) a setting that permits help to be given and received.

Arbunckle has mentioned three points about counselling. They are:

a) Counselling is a process between two persons.

b) The basic aim of counselling is to help the person in solving his problems Independently.

c) Counselling is a professional job involving professionally trained persons.

The following points below will give a clear picture as to what counselling is not.

What counselling is not:

- Counselling is not giving information alone, though information may be present
- Counselling is not giving advice
- Counselling is not influencing the clients' values, attitudes, beliefs, interests or decisions with or without any scolding, or compelling without the use of physical force
- Counselling is not interviewing, though interviewing is involved.

Therefore, the main objective of counselling is to bring about a voluntary change in the client.

Counselling can be of two types, individual or group. Individual counselling is done face to face and Group counselling is done to a group of individuals. Group counselling is a useful way of helping adolescents for addressing issues that are related to peer group influence.

Who can benefit from Counselling ?

All of us irrespective of our age, sex and profession have been taking help from

our elders, teachers and friends in solving certain problems. However, you might have faced situations where you would have felt the need to take help from a professional or trained and experienced person such as a counsellor. If we have a problem that we are unable to solve and because of which not able to carry on day to day activities, then we can go and seek professional help. All of us can benefit from counselling provided we need such a professional help. Counselling can also form an integral part of the healing process for those who have lost a loved one, or who are suffering from a terminal illness, helping them to come to terms with death and bereavement. Specialists are available for areas of specific need, for example, Educational, Career Counselling, Family, Personal and Marriage Counselling. Group Counselling is beneficial for people to share their feelings and receive advice from those in similar circumstances such as victims and survivors of disasters.

3.2.3 Principles of Guidance and Counselling

When you plan to guide an individual it is important to keep the following points/ principles in mind.

- Maintain dignity of the individual which is supreme. For example, providing privacy while talking or calling the person by name.
- As each individual is unique and is different from every other individual. It is best not to compare one person with another.
- Each person's problems are different. The problems and causes are interrelated, so a deep knowledge of the causes is essential.
- While giving guidance or counselling, the social setting of the individual is essential. The community, language, place (whether the adolescent is coming from a village, town or city) must be taken into consideration.
- It should be based on the attitudes and personal perceptions of the individual
- It helps the individual to enhance himself or herself.
- The individual has the ability to learn and can be helped to make choices that will lead to self-direction and appropriate decision making.
- Each individual may, at times need information and personalized assistance which is best given by competent professional personnel.
- It is a continuous and slow process.
- Thus we see that guidance and counselling is a continuous process, flexible and dynamic process concerned with the 'whole individual'.

3.2.4 Relationship between Guidance and Counselling

The Terms guidance and counselling, in some way or the other are related to each other. They are similar in some ways and dissimilar in some other ways. Their relationship is drawn as under.

1. Guidance is an organized service to identify and develop the potentialities of pupils. Comprehensive information about every (all the) pupil is collected with the help of different tests/tools, resources, which are recorded and interpreted.

The findings are communicated to the individual to help them to understand themselves. Pupils are also given information about educational and vocational opportunities available to them and are helped in their career planning and development.

In counselling more often than not the informations are collected and shared related to problem situations faced by the pupils. The individual is encouraged to talk about her/his problem(s). The counsellor may also ask questions, seek his/ her views, and make observations. Information sought through guidance makes the basis for counselling sessions. Based on the findings the individual is encouraged to make suitable decisions and take actions to solve the problem(s). Thus, information's are gathered and shared in both the process but two are no same.

2. Guidance is helping individual to develop his/her potentialities for all round development whereas counselling helps individual to deal with complex problem situations and make adjustment/adaptations if necessary to lead useful life.

3. Guidance is promotive and preventive whereas counselling is therapeutic.

4. Guidance can be given in any normal setting whereas counselling requires a guidance may be done by any teacher or guiding person whereas counselling can be done by skillful counsellor who has had professional training in counselling.

5. Guidance may be done by any teacher or guiding person whereas counselling can be done by skillful counsellor who has had professional training in counselling.

6. Guidance is an integral part of education and assists in fulfilling in educational organized as a specialized services to deal with problem situations faced by students and may be of teachers.

7. Guidance includes some degree of counselling to help students deal with their day to day problems which is done by teachers, parents, significant others.

Counselling includes guidance of individual which is done by Counsellors while helping students to solve their problems. This means there is over lapping and misuse of the terms.

These distinctions are briefly presented in tabular form in Box.

Difference between Guidance and Counselling		
	Guidance	**Counselling**
1) To whom given	Students;Nurses facing problems	Students; Nurses facing problems
2) By whom given	Tutors; Parent; Counsellors	Counsellors i.e., specially trained professional people with counselling skills.
3) Where	Schools, home; everywhere;womb to tomb.	In a special setting conductive to giving and receiving help for interviewing.
4) How given	By way of giving educational, vocational information and helping individuals to understand themselves	Giving guidance with a view to enabling individuals to make decisions for himself/herself and coming to terms with life……….
5) Purpose	Optimum development of individual student for ultimate development for school.	Helping individuals develop self confidence and adjust to life strategies and schooling problems.

3.3 PURPOSE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The purpose of Guidance and Counselling can be related to 1) Individual and 2) Society.

1) Individual Related Purpose

(i) To help students recognise and develop their potentialities to achieve their educational aims and objectives and improve academically and to develop positive attitude.

(ii) To help students aware about vocational and career opportunities available regionally, nationally and internationally so as to help them make informed decisions from among various choices.

(iii) To help students for all round personal and social development on the basis of their interests, abilities and resources.

(iv) To help students recognise their capacities, develop self confidence and adjust to academic, school, family and personal problems.

2) Society Related Purpose

(i) To develop good citizenship in students

(ii) To develop positive attitude towards family life and the society

(iii) To help in proper and best utilisation of resources.

3.3.1 Stages of Educational Guidance

So far we have discussed the meaning of guidance, and counselling and the relationship between guidance and counselling. The individual and society related purpose of guidance and counselling was also discussed. As problems are of various types from different spheres, we need various types of guidance services to effectively solve the problems related to various aspects of individual and society.

Educational Guidance is a process of helping students to achieve the self-understanding and self-direction assisting them to make informed choices and move toward personal goals. It helps the students in choosing the courses of study, planning for their future on completion of their secondary/higher secondary schooling and promoting proper adjustment. Educational guidance is required at each level during the individual's education.

Educational guidance has specific functions at different stages

a) Primary and Secondary Stage:

At the **primary stage,** educational guidance will help in assisting students make a proper beginning in school and preparing them to enter the secondary stage.

At the **secondary stage,** educational guidance is intended to assist students to make an appraisal of their interests, abilities, and skills, to make progress in their education and to build motivation for study.

b) Higher Secondary Stage:

At this stage guidance helps in the selection of courses, (after std X) or vocation in tune with their abilities and interests and understanding the objectives of higher education and plan for their future career plans. Information regarding admissions to polytechnic institutions, colleges and university and vocational information provided will also help. Proper guidance will help in building a positive attitude, bring about self-confidence and be able to cope with academic stress.

c) College and University Stage:

"What shall I do in life? And what am I best suited for"? This is a normal question which we ask ourselves.

At the **college and university stage** guidance helps the pupils to selecting their subjects of specializing, which help later on in choosing their career or vocation. Career can be defined as the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences overtime. Each person has only one career. **Vocation** *is a term for an occupation to which a person is specially drawn or for which they are suited, trained or qualified* (Wikipedia).

We can see that guidance has personal and social significance. It aims to help an individual in the process of his adjustment with himself and his environment.

Activity 2

When you were studying in Class X or XII, how did you decide what course to take and what to specialize? Where you confused? Who counselled you or directed you?

3.3.2 Areas of Counselling

Due to various problems and stress we experience in day to day life, the need for guidance and counselling is vital to help individuals handle situations and problems in a better way.

Here, the areas of counselling are classified on the basis of various problems and problem situations that can occur to students in schools and colleges.

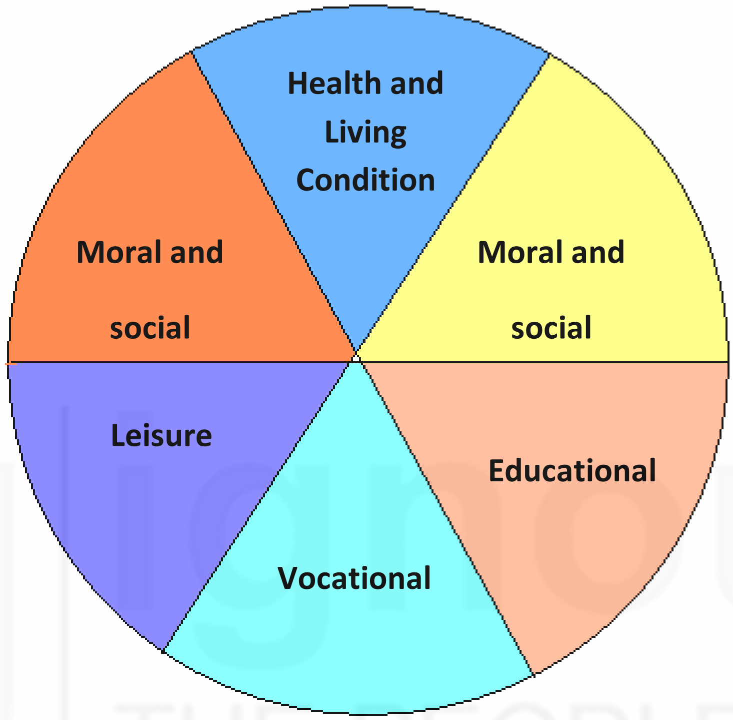


Fig. 3.1: Area covered through counselling

1) Educational
2) Vocational
3) Health and Living Conditions
4) Personal
5) Moral and Social
6) Leisure

These areas are interrelated and sometimes overlapping. We will learn about each of these areas so that we can have a better understanding of the role and functions of a counsellor.

1) Educational

In this area students may face various problems. Some of the common problems are given below:

- I do not feel like studying my lessons
- I am not able to understand what is taught in class most of the time

- I am too tired to study
- I do not get enough time to study
- I am not able to concentrate while studying
- I have too many friends so I am not able to get time to study.

Educational counselling helps the student to get maximum benefit out of education and solve their problems related to education and class room.

The following functions are performed by the counsellor :

i. Help the students to manage time and daily schedule

ii. Develop good study habits that are most appropriate to students.

iii. Help the students to understand their own interests and abilities.

iv. Provide career related information to help students make informed decisions.

2) Vocational

There are various vocational opportunities available and along with it different demands from different individuals. Students may face problems in this area such as:

- I am not able to decide about the kind of job to take up
- I do not know what part-time job I can take up
- I do not like the work I am doing
- The working hours are too long
- I am not sure of my future
- I am not able to earn enough money in this job
- I am not confident about myself.

Vocational counselling assists students to select an occupation most suited to their abilities, interests and aptitude. It helps them to prepare for it, enter it and progress in it. It should begin at +2 level in the secondary schools.

The following functions of a counsellor are essential :

i. To help students to understand their abilities, interests, values and goals

ii. To provide information on various occupations and jobs available

iii. To help them be aware of the various programmes of financial assistance – scholarships and loans for improving their prospects.

We shall now go on to the area of health and living conditions.

3) Health and Living Conditions

Some of the problems which are faced by the students in this area include:

- Getting tired easily
- Frequent headaches and cold
- Falling sick very often
- Not getting enough nutritious food to eat
- Have to take care of brothers and sisters at home.

Counselling in this area help students in taking care of their health, be aware of good health practices and hygiene and make proper adjustments to the environments. Counselling in this area will also help students develop interest in games and other activities which will promote health and well being.

4) Personal

Every student faces certain personal problems about which s/he may be very anxious. Counselling in this area will help them cope with the problems.

Some of the problems encountered in this area are:

- I lack courage and confidence
- I am always worried about something
- I have pimples on my face
- I have a dark complexion
- I am fat
- I wish I was like my friend- confident and smart
- I feel lonely
- I do not have any friends
- My elders always shout at me
- My parents expect too much from me
- My parents will not allow me to go out with other persons
- I want to be loved and cared for
- Nobody likes/loves me.

Activity 3

When you were an adolescent what were some of the problems you have faced in the personal area. List them out.

In personal counselling, the counsellor helps students to understand and solve the problems. Some of the specific functions performed by the counsellor in this area are as follows:

i. Help students accept themselves and others

ii. Provides at the right time, hints or suggestions to improve personal appearance

iii. Help students build self-confidence and self-esteem

iv. Help students develop interpersonal relationship skills

v. Provide advice on handling personal problems.

5) Moral, Religious and Social

Some of the problems arising in this area are as follows:

- I have been told that I am dishonest at times
- I lack moral values
- I am very confused if what I am doing is right or wrong
- I do not have time for religious worship
- I am forced to go to religious places and worship.

The role of a counsellor here would be to enable students to inculcate good moral values and practice them in day to day life.

6) Leisure

Students need opportunities of self expression in which they can try out their talents and express themselves. Some students are shy and they need encouragement to make proper use of their potentials and talents. Counselling in this area helps students to find opportunities for creative use of leisure time.

Counselling functions in this area is to provide opportunities in curricular and co-curricular activities, to develop their interests which will provide avenues for recreation.

Some of the problems faced may be:

- No time for recreation
- Lack of facilities to learn handicrafts
- Limited opportunities for sports
- Unable to participate in school competition.

In this section, we have categorized different problems according to the area they belong to, but as mentioned earlier these problems are interrelated and many times overlap. Hence, the counsellor must be able to go deep into the root of the problem and identify the areas and different related problems to be able to help the student to cope or overcome the problem.

3.4 COUNSELLING PROCESS

Counselling is about helping people who want to change some aspects of their thoughts, feelings or behaviour to enhance their life, or simply to explore and/or clarify their thoughts or feelings.

Counselling is a problem solving process. The counsellor helps students to understand themselves, their potentials, the assets, the problems they are facing

and making decisions to take alternative actions to solve their problems. In doing so, the counsellor, follows certain series of steps or phases through some phases and is referred to as counselling process.

3.4.1 Phases/Steps in Counselling Process

There are five different phases/steps of counselling process although it is difficult ot divide such a complex process into clearly defined phases. These phases include:

i) Establishing Relationship

ii) Making Assessment

iii) Setting Goals

iv) Interventions

v) Termination and Follow up.

The phases may overlap each other, e.g., the assessment may begin even while the phase of establishing relationship is still going on or goal setting may start while assessment it still going on. These phases are in progressive movement and collectively described the counselling process, as depicted in Fig. 3.2.

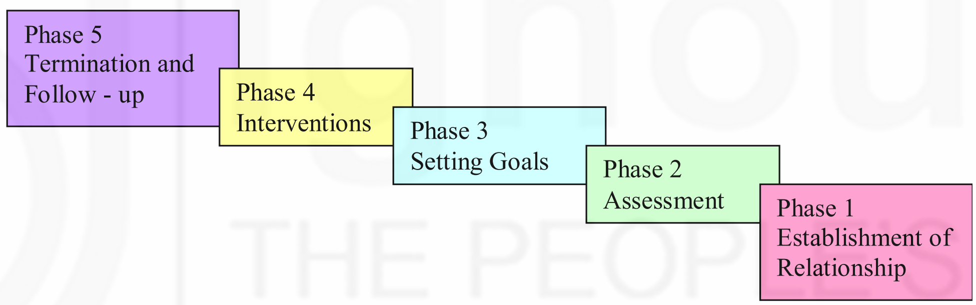


Fig.3.2: Phases of Counselling

i) Establishing Relationship

Establishing productive Relationship is the core phase in the process of counselling. It affects the progress of the process and acts as a curative agent in itself. It should be recognized that each counsellee-counsellor relationship is unique and hence it is not possible to have a generalized that each counselee-counsellor relationship. It includes such factors as respect, trust, and a sense of psychological comfort which help in formation and sustaining good relationship. Although each counsellor has her own style of building up a relationship, but a few guidelines will be useful. These are :

Begins the phase with adequate social skills

- Introduce yourself
- Listen attentively and remember the client's name
- Always address the individual by his/her preferred name
- Ensure physical comfort
- Do not interrupt the individual while s/he is speaking
- Observe non-verbal communications.

The relationship is not established in just a single session but may require several sessions before s/he becomes comfortable with you and accepts you into his/her inner world.

ii) Assessment

Making assessment is a phase in which individuals are encouraged to talk about their problems; counsellor asks questions, collects information, seeks his/her views, observes and possibly helps the individual to clearly state his/her problems. This is the data collecting phase, and involves several specific skills such as:

- Observation
- Enquiry
- Making associations among facts
- Recording
- Making educated guesses and interpretations
- Recording of information should be done systematically.

iii) Setting Goals

Setting goals is phase based on educated based on educated guesses/interpretations made in the previous phase. The major purpose of this phase is to provide direction to the conditions, a course of action, or an outcome. Sometimes the individual may be concluded. Setting goals may be of two types-immediate and ultimate.

The process of setting goals is cooperatively done by the counsellor and the individual.

It requires the skills of:

- Drawing inference,
- Differentiation, and
- Educating individuals to think realistically.

It should be emphasized that goals are not fixed for all time to come and can be changed whenever new information is received or new insight is developed.

iv) Intervention

Intervention is a phase which is more influenced by the viewpoints a counsellor holds about the counselling process. After setting goals the question that follows is 'How shall we accomplish these goals'? The intervention used will depend upon the problem area and the nature of specific problem and the individual. Hence, the choice of the intervention is a process of adaptation and the counsellor should be prepared to change the intervention when the selected intervention is not working. This is similar to medical treatment. When one treatment does not work, the practitioner tries the alternative treatment. The counselling skills needed are skills in handling the interventions, knowledge of its effects and ability to read client's reactions. Individuals can be asked in the beginning about what interventions they have tried earlier so that other intervention can be used.

v) Termination and Follow up

All counselling has as its ultimate criterion a successful termination. It must be done without destroying the accomplishments gained and should be done with sensitivity, intention and by phasing. It is not unusual for the individual to have a feeling of a sense of loss; hence termination should be planned over few sessions. Follow-up appointments can also be fixed for some time.

3.4.2 Attributes of a Counsellor

In order to provide effective counselling services, the counsellor needs to demonstrate certain attributes. Some of these attributes which makes a person a good counsellor are as under:

i) **Self-Awareness and Understanding:** A person who has awareness of her needs, motivation for helping, feelings, personal strengths and weakness acts as a good counsellor. These people do not use projection (for example: "I had a very aggressive counselee" instead of "I felt angry with the counselee"), defensiveness (for example: instead of responding to the counselee's feelings to a question" whether counselling will do any good", she may express her personal feeling to insecurity by raising her voice or other non-verbal behaviour.

ii) **Good Mental Health:** Although no person is totally problem free but a person with less problems of good mental health can be a good cousellor, otherwise their own problems will jeopardize the a process of counselling.

iii) **Sensitivity:** A person who is aware of resources, limitations, and vulnerability of other persons as well as is keenly perceptive to other persons feelings and needs are considered to have sensitivity. A person having the understanding of individual will act as a good counsellor. (A person who can put one's foot into other's shoe).

iv) **Open-Mindedness:** A person who is free from fixed or pre-conceived ideas. It does not mean that they have no personal values or beliefs, but they are aware of their own values and beliefs and are able to distinguish them from the beliefs and values of others. They do not thrust their values on others.

v) **Objectivity:** A person with the ability of not getting involved with the other person and at the same time, stand back and see accurately what is happening. (Not to get drowned while saving others.)

vi) **Approachability:** A person who has some resemblance with other known pleasant and friendly person, who is friendly, has positive attitudes about others and can be approached without a feeling of apprehension.

Check Your Progress 1

a. What is meant by guidance?

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b. What is counselling?

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c. Enumerate the areas of counselling.

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d. List out the phases/steps in counselling process.

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e. What attributes make a good counsellor?

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have read about the term guidance and counselling and understood that it is a dynamic and continuous process. You must have understand that Guidance is the assistance given to the individual in the process of development. It is a service meant for all and has a role to play in every developing economy. Counselling is helping the person to take decision to solve problems. You must have also read the relationship between guidance and counselling and the differences between the two concepts. By this you will be able to provide need based guidance and preventive counselling to adolescents as steps of counselling process has also been explained.

3.6 KEY WORDS

Vocation : is a term for an occupation to which a person is specially drawn or for which they are suited, trained or qualified.

Intellectual : involving thought and reason

Self-concept : All information and beliefs individuals have about their own characteristics and themselves

Occupational self-concept : Self concept related to one's occupation

3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

a. Guidance is the assistance given to an individual to help him, to adjust to himself, to others and to his own environment. In this way guidance is a process of all-round development.

b. Counselling aaccording to **Cormier and Hackney (1987)** counselling is defined as the "helping relationship" that includes –

   i) someone seeking help,

   ii) someone willing to give help who is capable or trained to help,

   iii) A setting that permits-help to be given and received".

c. Areas of Counselling are:

   i) Educational
   ii) Vocational
   iii) Health and Living Conditions
   iv) Personal
   v) Moral and Social
   vi) Leisure

These areas are interrelated and sometimes overlapping.

d. Phases/Steps in counselling process

   It is difficult to divide this complex process into clearly defined phases. The phases are enumerated –

   i) Establishing relationship

   ii) Assessment

   iii) Setting Goals

   iv) Intervention

   v) Termination and Follow-Up.

e. Attributes of a good counsellor

   i) Self awareness and understanding

   ii) Good mental health

   iii) Sensitivity

   iv) Open mindedness

   v) Objectivity

   vi) Trustworthiness

   vii) Approachability

3.8 REFERENCES

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Soft skills, or human skills, are becoming more in demand by employers as customers typically prefer to do business with organizations they know, like and trust. If you desire to excel personally and professionally, you need to cultivate and market your human skills. In this article, we'll cover the definition of human skills, provide you with examples, give ways in which to improve human skills and provide ideas on how you might highlight your own developing human skills.

What are human skills?

Human skills are the skills we use to relate to one another. Someone who possesses strong human skills is likely very adept at social media for business purposes. A person with strong human skills easily engages the audience, potential customer or current customer. They're able to connect with people and those people feel like they know the individual personally.

People with strong human skills project a welcoming warmth that most people want to be a part of. This is beneficial on a personal and professional level.

Examples of human skills

Here are a few examples of human skills:

- Communication
- Understanding body language
- Empathy
- Self-awareness
- Growth mindset

Communication

Good communication skills are the basis for any relationship. Without the ability to communicate well, we often become confused and things get distorted. Skilled communicators are trusted and they effectively convey a thought or need.

A good communicator can reach all levels of an organization from peers to management. They will excel in both email and in-person conversations. The key to

good communicating is also strong listening skills. It's important to hear what people are saying to you.

Related: **4 Types of Communication**

Understanding body language

With much of communication being non-verbal, being able to read body language is a very important skill to master. A person conveys emotions in the way they stand, whether they make eye contact or not and even the angle of their head. You can study the secrets behind decoding body language and apply those skills to areas like sales, customer support and communication. With those skills, you'll know who is receptive to your message and who needs a little more convincing.

Related: **Nonverbal Communication Skills: Definition and Examples**

Empathy

Empathy is one of the most celebrated soft skills these days. To be empathetic means that you're able to understand the opinions and biases of others as well as how their own history or position may influence their thoughts and reactions. This can help you in areas like marketing and relationships, in general.

Being empathetic means you suspend judgment and concentrate on understanding someone else's perspective. It can be very powerful in establishing relationships as well as persuading others. For instance, it's helpful to understand their influences before you design a campaign enticing them to do what you're asking.

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is understanding the biases and challenges you may have in your own life. Our experiences often define our attitudes and being self-aware means you realize and understand these things, giving you the ability to move beyond them.

Growth mindset

This buzz phrase is often used about innovation in business but a growth mindset can also be applied to the way you view personal development. Claiming someone has a growth mindset means they aren't satisfied with the status quo. For example, someone with a growth mindset will be focused on becoming a better person and increasing their knowledge personally and professionally. Many employers hire people who can exemplify a growth mindset because that means the candidate is generally more willing to change than someone who does not embrace growth.

How to improve human skills

Improving human skills often includes:

Receiving feedback

Ask for feedback to understand what areas offer the largest potential for improvement. Organizations that use 360-degree insights into professional growth can help an employee see potential areas of improvement from all levels.

Incorporate constructive criticism

Incorporate the learning opportunities and constructive criticism you received from the feedback. Look for patterns and areas of improvement. If one person provides a suggestion for improvement, there may be a personal bias behind the comment. But if their comment is echoed by several sources, it's likely a good area to work on.

Create a plan

Brainstorm ideas with your manager, mentor or friend about how you can act on suggestions. You are more likely to change your behavior and become better in the suggested area if you plot a course of action on how you will do that. For instance, wanting to become a better listener is only the beginning of making it happen. You must create a plan on how you will no longer spend conversations thinking about what you will say next. Instead, pay attention to what the other person is saying until it is your time to speak.

Then instead of adding your opinion or experience, ask them for further clarification or explanation of what they are saying. It will help you be a better listener and will make them feel more valued because you are taking an interest in what they're saying.

Practice

If you want to become better at a particular human skill, you must try it more than once to excel at it. Build a habit of your new practice to become successful at it. This means incorporating the human skill in all aspects of your life personally and professionally. For example, being a good listener in your personal life but not your professional one will not help you fully master the skill. You need repetition, practice and reinforcement to do that. Try a volunteer opportunity for additional practice. For instance, if you want to be a better listener, volunteering at a nursing home creates the perfect opportunity to try your new skill.

How to highlight human skills

Whether you were born with them or you've worked hard to acquire them, employers value human skills. To impress a hiring manager, you'll need to prove you have human skills. In that situation, it's not enough to state that you're a good communicator, for instance. You must give examples, but human skills can be difficult to illustrate. Here are some ways you can highlight them:

Show the thought process

During an interview, you are in a unique position to be able to talk about yourself and your accomplishments. Instead of every answer to an interview question being just about what you did, speak to the thought process behind your actions.

Take a class

An easy way to highlight the mastery of human skills is to take a class in it and receive a grade or certification. This can easily be added to a resume.

Volunteer

A volunteer position helps show the development of a human skill and can be easily talked about in those terms. For instance, you could join a chamber of commerce and sit on their ambassador's committee to get a better understanding of different leadership styles so that you can improve your own.

Ask for additional work or assignments

Getting professional practice can help you improve in the area of your choice. For instance, if you want to become a better communicator you may ask your supervisor if you can help human resources on the committee working to re-design the company culture. Sometimes there are interdepartmental groups and other special projects that can help you work on your desired area for more practice.

What are Human Relations Skills?

By Indeed Editorial Team

Updated March 4, 2021
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The Indeed Editorial Team comprises a diverse and talented team of writers, researchers and subject matter experts equipped with Indeed's data and insights to deliver useful tips to help guide your career journey.

Human relations is critical for developing and maintaining a positive work environment, retaining employees and encouraging productivity. By making human relations the focus of your management approach, you can effectively create a workplace culture in which

your employees can thrive. Developing your human relations skills can help you modify your management style so it's human relations-centric.

In this article, we discuss what human relations is, why human relations is important in the workplace and specific human relations skills you should focus on developing.

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What is human relations?

Human relations refers to the ability to interact in a healthy manner with others and build strong relationships. From the perspective of managers in a company, it involves the process of creating systems and communication channels to enable group employee relationships as well as strong one-on-one relationships. Additionally, it includes the process of training people for specific roles, addressing their needs, resolving conflicts between employees or between management and employees and creating a positive workplace culture.

Related: **7 Types of Workplace Management Theories**

Why is human relations important?

Human relations is critical in business for a variety of reasons, including:

- **Employee productivity:** When relationships between a company's managers and its employees are supportive and positive, productivity is shown to increase. Additionally, when employees are dependent upon each other with their work, it directly influences productivity. When employees feel that they're treated with respect and recognized for contributing to a company's success, they are more likely to produce quality work.

- **Motivation:** When employees recognize that performing job-related tasks will allow them to feel appreciated and valued, they are more motivated to do them.
- **Positive perception:** An employee's interpersonal and communication skills impact the perception that other employees have about their ability to positively contribute to the workplace. A positive perception of an employee's work and attitude could create opportunities for future advancement.
- **Employee retention:** Employees who feel they're treated respectfully by their employer are more likely to continue working for them for a longer period of time. By using human relations to establish a feeling of mutual trust and value, a company creates an environment where employees feel that they matter and are less likely to pursue other opportunities.
- **Creativity:** In the workplace, creativity is often dependent on the employee's ability to communicate and share ideas with their colleagues. By creating a positive workplace culture and nurturing workplace relationships and teamwork, a business can encourage creativity and more quickly develop products and services to meets the consumer's changing needs.

Related: Human Resources: Definition and How It Works

Human relations skills

By developing key human relations skills, managers and employees both can build and maintain stronger relationships within a workforce and maintain a positive work environment. Here are the most critical human relations skills:

Communication

Communication is essential in any work environment. However, it's especially critical for those in a leadership role. By being able to communicate effectively with employees, you can ensure that employees feel valued and motivated in the work they're doing. Managers can accomplish this through written communication like notes or emails as well as one-on-one conversations. By conveying messages to others and listening with the intention of understanding, managers can nurture feelings of trust. Additionally, employees are more likely to feel close to their managers if they are willing to share their own personal perspectives and feelings and encourage others to do the same.

Leaders should adapt the language to the situation. This often means modifying their choice of words depending on who they're speaking with. For example, if they're communicating with a high-level executive, they should use a more formal communication style than if they were speaking with a member of their own team or a customer. Another approach to modifying your communication style is to mirror the style of the person you're speaking with. Look for interests that you have in common with them and match their physical stance and tone of voice.

Empathy

Empathy is another important human relations skill that allows you to show genuine interest in understanding the feelings or challenges that others are experiencing. Empathy allows you to look at a situation from their perspective and help them feel they can trust you. By looking at a situation from their point of view, you can show them compassion and more easily find solutions to problems they may be having, if appropriate. This can strengthen the relationship you have with them.

Conflict resolution

Conflict can occur in the workplace when you have a large number of team members with different personality types, goals and worldviews. Managers, then, must have well-developed conflict resolution skills. When conflict arises, you need to be able to listen to the individual perspectives so that each person involved feels that they are being heard and understood. Once the facts are presented, you then work with the parties to come up with a solution that everyone is comfortable with. By developing strong conflict resolution skills, you can actually help to strengthen the relationships of employees on your team and maintain or restore harmony in the workplace.

Multi-tasking

Leaders must be able to manage multiple, sometimes competing, priorities while staying on-deadline. They also are often interrupted with questions and face numerous unexpected tasks on a regular basis. They are responsible for making sure that their own work is completed and also for ensuring the work of their time is being completed in a timely manner.

Organization

Leaders need to be able to manage their time effectively and work efficiently, especially when they're working on multiple priorities that are time-sensitive. Organization impacts all areas of a working environment. It includes a manager's ability to keep their physical workspace organized as well as organize their processes so they are efficient and get the desired results. Managers are typically responsible for maintaining employee records and filling out paperwork. Organization skills are critical in order to be able to manage all of these responsibilities.

Negotiation

Negotiation skills are important for helping multiple parties reach agreeable terms. Managers are often responsible for helping reach agreements between vendors and their company, negotiating employment offers or even just managing opposing viewpoints. The mirroring approach described above can help managers be more effective negotiators.

Stress management

Because leaders are responsible for managing the expectations of stakeholders, managing a team of people and prioritizing their own work to achieve company objectives, they are periodically faced with stressful situations. For this reason, managers need to be equipped with effective stress management skills and be able to remain calm under pressure. By actively using stress management techniques and modeling them for their team, they can help maintain a calm work environment, even when a team is under high levels of pressure.

10 Human Relations Skills and How To Improve Them

Discover 10 Human Relations skills along with some of the best tips to help you improve these abilities.

Career Insights

Published Aug 12, 2022

Human relations skills are the skills we use to interact with other people. They include communication, empathy, negotiation and conflict resolution. Having strong human relations skills is essential for both personal and professional success. In this guide, we'll discuss what human relations skills are, why they're important and how you can improve your own human relations skills.

HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS

- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Active Listening
- Emotional Intelligence
- Interpersonal Skills
- Teamwork

- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Negotiation
- Organizational Skills

CLOSE-

Communication

Communication is an important human relations skill because it allows you to connect with others, build relationships and manage conflict. When you can effectively communicate, you can build trust, resolve conflict and create a positive work environment. Good communication skills also allow you to better manage your own emotions and reactions, which can help you stay calm and collected in stressful situations.

Building good communication skills takes practice and patience. It’s important to be aware of your own communication style and to be open to learning about how others communicate. You should also be aware of the different types of communication, such as verbal and nonverbal, and be able to use them effectively.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is the process of resolving a disagreement between two or more parties. It can be a difficult process, but it’s important to resolve conflicts quickly and efficiently to avoid escalation.

There are many different types of conflict resolution techniques, but the goal is always to find a solution that is acceptable to all parties involved. Some common conflict resolution techniques include negotiation, mediation, arbitration and compromise.

Conflict resolution skills are important in any role in human resources, as well as in customer service, sales and management. In these roles, you may be required to mediate disputes, negotiate agreements or arbitrate disputes.

Active Listening

Active listening is a key human relations skill. It involves paying attention to what the other person is saying, both verbally and non-verbally, and responding in a way that shows that you understand. Active listening can help build rapport, trust and respect. It can also help resolve conflicts and improve communication.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware and understand your own emotions and the emotions of others. It’s about being able to regulate your emotions, respond effectively to emotions and create positive relationships.

People with high emotional intelligence are better at managing their own emotions and responding to the emotions of others. They’re also better at creating positive relationships and working well in teams. All of these skills are important in human relations.

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are the skills we use to interact with other people. They include communication, empathy, active listening, and more. Interpersonal skills are important in every area of life, from personal relationships to work relationships.

Interpersonal skills are important in human relations because they help us build relationships, understand others, and communicate effectively. Good interpersonal skills can help you build better relationships, improve communication, and understand others.

Teamwork

Teamwork is an important human relations skill because it helps build relationships, trust and communication between team members. When team members work together, they have to communicate effectively, share information and resources, and work together to achieve a common goal. This can help build trust and relationships within the team, and can also help improve communication and relationships with other teams or departments.

Leadership

Leadership is an important skill in human relations because it allows you to motivate and inspire others to achieve a common goal. Leaders can inspire others to be better versions of themselves by setting a positive example and providing guidance. Leaders also need to be able to manage conflict and build relationships with their team members.

Leadership skills are important in any field, but they are especially important in human relations because they allow you to better manage and resolve conflicts. Leaders can also inspire their team members to work harder and be more productive.

Problem Solving

Problem solving is an important human relations skill because it allows you to resolve conflicts and improve relationships. When you’re able to solve problems, you’re able to see both sides of the issue and find a solution that works for everyone. Problem solving also requires good communication, which is another important human relations skill.

#####

Explain why Active Listening is an important Human Relations skill.

Active listening is an important human relations skill because it allows you to really hear what someone is saying and understand their point of view. When you're able to actively listen, you're able to build better relationships and resolve conflicts. Active listening also requires good communication, which is another important human relations skill.

Negotiation

Negotiation is an important skill in human relations because it allows you to reach agreements with others that are beneficial for both parties. When you are able to negotiate effectively, you can build relationships with others and increase trust. Additionally, negotiation can help you resolve conflicts and improve communication.

To be a successful negotiator, you need to be able to understand the other person's needs, wants and expectations. You also need to be able to identify common ground and find ways to compromise. When you are able to negotiate effectively, you can improve the overall quality of your relationships with others.

Organizational Skills

Organizational skills are important in human relations because they help you keep track of information, stay on schedule and manage your time. Good organizational skills can help you be more efficient and effective in your work, which can lead to better relationships with your co-workers and clients.

Organizational skills include the ability to set goals, make plans, use time effectively, delegate tasks and manage your time. Good organizational skills can help you stay organized, which can lead to less stress and more productivity. When you're more organized, you can better manage your time and meet deadlines. This can lead to better relationships with your co-workers and clients.

How to Improve Your Human Relations Skills

1. Use "I" statements
When communicating with others, use "I" statements. For example, instead of saying "You always interrupt me," try "I feel disrespected when I am interrupted." This will help the other person understand how you feel and why, rather than putting them on the defensive.

2. Avoid using absolutes
Absolutes are words like "never" or "always" that generalize a situation. For example, instead of saying "You never listen to me," try "I feel unheard when my ideas are not given consideration." Again, this will help the other person understand your perspective without making them feel attacked.

3. Seek first to understand, then to be understood
This involves taking the time to truly understand another person's point of view before trying to explain your own. In order to do this, you must be an active listener. This means giving the other person your full attention, making eye contact, and repeating back what you heard to ensure understanding. Only after you have done this should you attempt to explain your own point of view.

4. Brainstorm solutions together
Once you have both had a chance to share your perspectives, it is time to brainstorm solutions together. It is important to remember that there is no such thing as a "right" solution – the goal is simply to find something that works for both of you. Be open to compromise, and avoid getting attached to any particular solution.

5. Agree on a plan of action
After you have come up with a solution that you are both happy with, agree on a plan of action. This might involve setting a deadline, assigning tasks, or checking in with each other at regular intervals. Having a specific plan will help to ensure that the issue is actually resolved, and not just forgotten about.

What are Management Skills?

Management skills can be defined as certain attributes or abilities that an executive should possess in order to fulfill specific tasks in an organization. They include the capacity to perform executive duties in an organization while avoiding crisis situations and promptly solving problems when they occur.

Management skills can be developed through learning and practical experience as a manager. The skills help the manager to relate with their fellow co-workers and know how to deal well with their subordinates, which allows for the easy flow of activities in the organization.

Good management skills are vital for any organization to succeed and achieve its goals and objectives. A manager who fosters good management skills is able to propel the company's mission and vision or business goals forward with fewer hurdles and objections from internal and external sources.

Management and leadership skills are often used interchangeably as they both involve planning, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, delegation, and time management. Good managers are almost always good leaders as well.

In addition to leading, a critical role of a manager is to also ensure that all parts of the organization are functioning cohesively. Without such integration, several issues can arise and failure is bound to happen. Management skills are crucial for various positions and at different levels of a company, from top leadership to intermediate supervisors to first-level managers.

Types of Management Skills

According to American social and organizational psychologist Robert Katz, the three basic types of management skills include:

1. Technical Skills

Technical skills involve skills that give the managers the ability and the knowledge to use a variety of techniques to achieve their objectives. These skills not only involve operating machines and software, production tools, and pieces of equipment but also the skills needed to boost sales, design different types of products and services, and market the services and the products.

2. Conceptual Skills

These involve the skills managers present in terms of the knowledge and ability for abstract thinking and formulating ideas. The manager is able to see an entire concept, analyze and diagnose a problem, and find creative solutions. This helps the manager to effectively predict hurdles their department or the business as a whole may face.

3. Human or Interpersonal Skills

The human or the interpersonal skills are the skills that present the managers' ability to interact, work or relate effectively with people. These skills enable the managers to make use of human potential in the company and motivate the employees for better results.

Examples of Management Skills

There is a wide range of skills that management should possess to run an organization effectively and efficiently. The following are six essential management skills that any manager ought to possess for them to perform their duties:

1. Planning

Planning is a vital aspect within an organization. It refers to one’s ability to organize activities in line with set guidelines while still remaining within the limits of the available resources such as time, money, and labor. It is also the process of formulating a set of actions or one or more strategies to pursue and achieve certain goals or objectives with the available resources.

The planning process includes identifying and setting achievable goals, developing necessary strategies, and outlining the tasks and schedules on how to achieve the set goals. Without a good plan, little can be achieved.

2. Communication

Possessing great communication skills is crucial for a manager. It can determine how well information is shared throughout a team, ensuring that the group acts as a unified workforce. How well a manager communicates with the rest of his/her team also determines how well outlined procedures can be followed, how well the tasks and activities can be completed, and thus, how successful an organization will be.

Communication involves the flow of information within the organization, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, vertical or horizontal, and it facilitates the smooth functioning of the organization. Clearly established communication channels in an organization allow the manager to collaborate with the team, prevent conflicts, and resolve issues as they arise. A manager with good communication skills can relate well with the employees and, thus, be able to achieve the company’s set goals and objectives easily.

3. Decision-making

Another vital management skill is decision-making. Managers make numerous decisions, whether knowingly or not, and making decisions is a key component in a manager's success. Making proper and right decisions results in the success of the organization, while poor or bad decisions may lead to failure or poor performance.

For the organization to run effectively and smoothly, clear and right decisions should be made. A manager must be accountable for every decision that they make and also be willing to take responsibility for the results of their decisions. A good manager needs to possess great decision-making skills, as it often dictates his/her success in achieving organizational objectives.

4. Delegation

Delegation is another key management skill. Delegation is the act of passing on work-related tasks and/or authorities to other employees or subordinates. It involves the process of allowing your tasks or those of your employees to be reassigned or reallocated to other employees depending on current workloads. A manager with good delegation skills is able to effectively and efficiently reassign tasks and give authority to the right employees. When delegation is carried out effectively, it helps facilitate efficient task completion.

Delegation helps the manager to avoid wastage of time, optimizes productivity, and ensures responsibility and accountability on the part of employees. Every manager must have good delegation abilities to achieve optimal results and accomplish the required productivity results.

5. Problem-solving

Problem-solving is another essential skill. A good manager must have the ability to tackle and solve the frequent problems that can arise in a typical workday. Problem-solving in management involves identifying a certain problem or situation and then finding the best way to handle the problem and get the best solution. It is the ability to sort things out even when the prevailing conditions are not right. When it is clear that a manager has great problem-solving skills, it differentiates him/her from the rest of the team and gives subordinates confidence in his/her managerial skills.

6. Motivating

The ability to motivate is another important skill in an organization. Motivation helps bring forth a desired behavior or response from the employees or certain stakeholders. There are numerous motivation tactics that managers can use, and choosing the right ones can depend on characteristics such as company and team culture, team personalities, and more. There are two primary types of motivation that a manager can use. These are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Bottom Line

Management skills are a collection of abilities that include things such as business planning, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, delegation, and time management. While different roles and organizations require the use of various skill sets, management skills help a professional stand out and excel no matter what their level. In top management, these skills are essential to run an organization well and achieve desired business objectives.



When developing your managerial abilities, don't neglect those vital conceptual skills

When most people think about management skills, they often focus on things like organization, delegation, and resource allocation. From the outside looking in, a manager's job can sometimes seem focused on the small things in business: creating schedules, directing employees, and relentlessly pushing a team to meet short and long-term goals. Few people ever consider the important conceptual skills that managers use to achieve their objectives.

In this post, we'll explain why conceptual skills are so important and examine seven conceptual skills that all good managers need if they want to be effective in their jobs. We'll also offer some tips that you can use to enhance your own conceptual skills and expand your management abilities.

What are conceptual skills?

Conceptual skills include all those abstract thinking abilities that enable you to see the big picture, consider new concepts, and apply them to solve new challenges. These abilities are used any time you need to evaluate complicated situations or put new information into its proper context. They are the skills needed to think through new scenarios, identify potential solutions, and create plans that apply those solutions in a way that resolves problems.

Conceptual skills are also critical to ensure that people learn from past experiences and continually refine their approach to problem solving as new challenges arise. These abilities are possessed by all great problem solvers and are also vital for strategic analysis and planning. Without conceptual skills, managers would be unable to adapt systems and processes to keep pace with unexpected changes.

Why are conceptual skills so vital for management?

No matter how well any workplace system is designed, evolving circumstances will eventually require some form of adaptation if a business is to survive and thrive. Good managers need to be able to adapt and apply new solutions to meet emerging problems. Conceptual skills provide managers with the tools they need to harness their available resources and overcome any challenges. These skills become even more important for managers in the highest levels of a company.

Managers who possess well-developed conceptual skills typically enjoy greater success with their teams, as they are capable of understanding even the most complex situations and recognize how to capitalize on opportunities. These managers are able to absorb new information, place it in the proper context, and adapt workplace solutions to meet challenging deadlines and production needs. Their ability to see the big picture helps them to navigate even the most challenging circumstances and continue to lead their teams to success.

Seven conceptual skills every good manager needs

As noted, conceptual skills are not a singular ability, but a collection of skills that managers need to be successful. To help you to better understand these abilities, we've put together a list of seven key conceptual skills that every great manager should possess.

1. Abstract thinking

Abstract thinking is a vital conceptual skill, because it enables you to think outside the box even when you don't have all of the information you need. When you can think in an abstract way, you can connect bits of information to better understand varied circumstances and challenges. An abstract thinker is able to make sense of complex information and ideas, step back and objectively analyze the situation, and create effective plans that help their teams to meet any challenge.

2. Logical thinking

Managers also need to be focused on logical thinking, to ensure that their plans and solutions are the ones that provide the most benefit to their companies. A logical thinker considers all of the most relevant possibilities and factors as they make their decision. This enables them to properly assess the pros and cons of any course of action.

3. Creative thinking

Creative thinking is vital for ensuring that cutting-edge ideas are not neglected during any thought process. For managers, some measure of creative thinking can help to inspire the exploration of possible solutions that might otherwise be ignored. Creative thinking also helps to bridge the divide between abstract thought and logic, enabling a great manager to find a viable solution to almost any problem.

4. Problem solving

Managers cannot wait for problems to solve themselves, but must proactively seek solutions to challenges as they arise. Great managers are skilled problem solvers and are able to save time and resources by identifying solutions in an efficient and effective manner. Problem-solving skills can include a whole host of analytical, strategic, and planning abilities.

5. Communication

Effective communication is a key conceptual skill as well. It's not enough to be able to think outside the box and apply logic to any problem-solving effort. Truly effective management also requires a manager to communicate those ideas to others in a persuasive manner. Great communication builds trust between team members, establishes clear boundaries of responsibility and authority, and helps to motivate everyone to work toward common goals.

6. Time management

Time management may not seem conceptual in nature, but it's a necessary component of any conceptual ability tool kit. Effective management of time is key to ensuring that work is organized and that projects get completed on time. A manager who can't make efficient use of their time will struggle to apply other conceptual skills in an effective way. Note that time management also includes things like task prioritization, delegation, and goal setting.

7. Decision-making

The final of our seven conceptual skills is a key ability for all managers: decision-making. Managers have to know how to make good decisions in a quick and efficient way. Regardless of whether they use a values-based, fact-based, or intuitive decision-making process, their ability to choose between multiple possible decisions is vital for a manager's success.

How you can develop your own conceptual abilities

If you want to grow and succeed in a management role, you'll need to develop your own conceptual skills. Below are some effective tips that you can use to expand these skills in ways that can advance your managerial career.

Observe other managers and leaders

Sometimes, the best way to improve your own skills is to follow in the footsteps of those who already possess the abilities you want to develop. Identify successful managers in your orbit and emulate their success. If you're fortunate, you may be able to get one of them to provide you with some tips and insights to help in your development, or even become your mentor. A great mentor can help to guide you on a path to greater success and is well worth the effort if you truly want to reach the next level in your managerial journey.

Attend business seminars

These days, there's no shortage of business seminars to attend. Some take place in the physical world, while others can be attended online. You can use Google to locate relevant seminars. Just pick the subject matter you want to learn more about and sign up! Alternatively, you can take advantage of the many podcasts and online videos that deal with skill development and other important management issues.

Keep pace with changes in your industry

No matter what industry you're in, chances are that it is in a constant state of evolution. One way to develop your conceptual skills is to consistently read trade journals and other sources of information about changes in your industry. That will help to ensure that you're continually being challenged with new information and new ideas.

Identify weaknesses in your company and try to find solutions

You can also exercise your conceptual skills by engaging in test studies in your own time. For example, try to identify a weakness in one of your company's processes or systems. Then apply various conceptual skills to explore different solutions that may improve those areas. You don't need to necessarily present your ideas to your superiors, but can simply use this as an opportunity to expand your conceptual ability.

Push your own boundaries

Above all else, never stop pushing yourself. Skill development should be a lifelong endeavor, especially for those whose aspirations include management or leadership positions. By constantly exposing yourself to new ideas and pushing yourself to expand your abilities, you can ensure that your conceptual skills can meet any new challenge that comes your way.

Add examples of conceptual skills on your resume

As you can see, conceptual skills are among the most critical abilities managers rely on to successfully perform their duties. Understanding how these abilities are used at every level of managerial responsibility, and the importance of developing your own conceptual skills, is an important step toward ensuring that you have the management skills you need to advance your career.

What are Technical Skills?

Skills on your resume can be broken down into two main categories:

- **Soft Skills:** Also called interpersonal skills, these are your social and emotional abilities. They affect how you interact and communicate with other people.
- **Hard Skills:** Hard skills are also called technical skills. They are a person's technical abilities and are often industry-specific.

Technical skills are hard skills because they are quantifiable in some way.

Usually, a hard skill can be either learned or taught.

Why Should I Include Technical Skills on My Resume?

Writing skills on your resume is a good way to highlight your personal and professional strengths to employers.

The key to including skills is to list both hard and soft skills.

By doing so, you show employers that you are both talented and a team player.

Certain industries require more technical skills than others.

These industries include:

- Information Technology (IT)
- Software Development
- UX and Web Design
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Marketing

However, all industries have specific technical skills they look for.

What Are the Best Technical Skills I Should Add to My Resume?

All businesses have industry-specific technical skills they look for.

To determine the best technical skills to add to your resume, you must examine the requirements of the industry you are entering.

For instance, if you are seeking a job as a software developer, emphasizing that you are skilled in using programming languages will be key.

Of course, all industries have certain technical skills they seek in applicants.

There are thousands of technical skills that you can learn and develop – far more than we can cover here.

The key is to read the job description thoroughly to identify the employer’s desired skills.

It is Friday evening and you are about to call it a day! Suddenly, your boss walks up to you and reveals that you will have to present the Quarterly Marketing Strategy on Monday. Your world comes crashing down! Weekend plans for dinner and movies are at once replaced by preparations for the presentation. Your reaction to this? Disturbed and Nervous, to say the least.

Relax. If presentations drive you into a panic mode always, it is time to take a chill pill. Firstly, the presentations are really important. It is perhaps the best way to communicate a strategy, an idea, news, a long-term plan to the entire team so that everyone is on the same page. Therefore, a presentation has to be highly impactful. With a little preparation and a few other approaches, you can also master the art of presentation.

We bring to you 7 magical tricks that will help you to nail any presentation that you conduct. So, here they are

(1) Practice! Practice! Practice

Nothing prepares you better than thorough practice. Making the presentation and inserting relevant data is simpler, but the challenge is to communicate it to the audience. For this, you must spend a lot of time to practice speaking eloquently. You need to understand which points to quickly discuss and which points to emphasize. You can record your practice sessions or ask a friend to give you feedback on them. You can also practice your speech with various hand gestures or movement to create a lasting impact. Proper practice will add that extra confidence when you make the presentation.

(2) Be a Storyteller

Nobody wants a stereotype presentation, where the speaker is mechanically going through the slides or reading it. To engage the audience and drive your point across, you can try to weave a story around the numbers or strategies. Not only will it make this interesting for the audience, but it will also easier for you to communicate your idea. The story can be impromptu or you can consider adding it to your script during a practice session. What can make things more interesting is a dash of humor. If you include a few jokes into your presentation, which are in good spirits, you are sure to win those brownie points!

Some examples of incorporating stories in your presentations are:

You can also check useful resources like:

[How to Use Storytelling in a Speech | Public Speaking]

(3) Use Voice Modulation

We always think that data and content are the backbones of a good presentation. They are surely important but not everything. Nothing impresses audiences more than an honest and baritone voice. You have to sound compelling and convincing. The pitch of your voice should change according to the situation you are talking about. If you are talking about the annual results, the company's achievements or some crucial targets, you have to slow the pace of your speech and use a deep voice. If you are talking about an upcoming event or a new collaboration, you need to convey that excitement. On the other hand, if you are talking about recent job cuts, you need to sound a little somber. Adding a personal touch makes all the difference.

Check out a few helpful videos You Tube like:

[Importance of Voice Modulation]

[Voice Training Exercise | Easy steps to improve the sound of your voice]

(4) Avoid Information Overdose

The idea of a presentation is to giveaway things in a crisp and condensed manner. You cannot stuff the slides with enormous data or include too many slides unless it's really important. Try to give bite sized information rather than shoving numbers down the audience's throat. For this, you need to do rigorous editing of your slides. If you feel a point is too tangential or less relevant, skip it. Another way to use the lesser relevant data is to create another presentation on the sub-topic rather than cramming it in the main slides.

(5) Make It Interactive

A presentation doesn't have to be a monologue. You can always include the audience through a comment or question/answer session. To keep the audience engaged, you can place the sessions strategically during the course of the presentation rather than reserving it for the end. Invite suggestions, queries, and comments or conduct a small survey. The more involved the audience is, the more successful your presentation will be. Also, be prepared for dicey questions. It will help you to get a better grip on the subject.

(6) Smile and Eye Contact

This may sound simple but is a very effective trick for good presentations. When you smile and make eye contact with the audience, you are being your confident self and establishing a rapport with them. This works both ways. The audience is able to relate to you and the

subject better, and you feel less nervous. Presentation is not just about the slides, but also about the way you connect with the audience.

(7) Remember the 10:20:30 Rule

Popularised by Guy Kawasaki, a global marketing veteran, the 10:20:30 has been the rule of thumb for presentations since 2005. It says your presentation should not have more than 10 slides, it shouldn't be longer than 20 minutes and the font size shouldn't be less than 30.

Coming to the slides, presentations are no longer restricted to Power Point. Today, Prezi and Haiku Deck are also widely used by many organizations. However, the bottom line is to keep it as short as possible. As for the time of the presentation, today's audience has a shorter attention span than ever, hence you need to keep it crisp and convey the core message within 20 minutes. Lastly, the font size specification is to make it legible, appealing and impactful to the human eyes.

Problem-Solving Skills: Definitions and Examples

By Indeed Editorial Team

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The Indeed Editorial Team comprises a diverse and talented team of writers, researchers and subject matter experts equipped with Indeed's data and insights to deliver useful tips to help guide your career journey.

When employers talk about problem-solving skills, they are often referring to the ability to handle difficult or unexpected situations in the workplace as well as complex business challenges. Organisations rely on people who can assess both kinds of situations and calmly identify solutions. Problem-solving skills are traits that enable you to do that. While problem-solving skills are valued by employers, they are also highly useful in other areas of life like relationship building and day-to-day decision making.

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What are problem-solving skills?

Problem-solving skills help you determine the source of a problem and find an effective solution. Although problem-solving is often identified as its own separate skill, there are other related skills that contribute to this ability.

Some key problem-solving skills include:

- Active listening
- Analysis
- Research
- Creativity
- Communication
- Dependability
- Decision making
- Team-building

Problem-solving skills are important in every career at every level. As a result, effective problem solving may also require industry or job-specific technical skills. For example, a registered nurse will need active listening and communication skills when interacting with patients but will also need effective technical knowledge related to diseases and medications. In many cases, a nurse will need to know when to consult a doctor regarding a patient’s medical needs as part of the solution.

Examples of problem-solving skills

To solve a problem effectively, you will likely use a few different skills. Here are a few examples of skills you may use when solving a problem.

Research

Researching is an essential skill related to problem solving. As a problem solver, you need to be able to identify the cause of the issue and understand it fully. You can begin to gather more information about a problem by brainstorming with other team members, consulting more experienced colleagues or acquiring knowledge through online research or courses.

Analysis

The first step to solving any problem is to analyse the situation. Your analytical skills will help you understand problems and effectively develop solutions. You will also need analytical skills during research to help distinguish between effective and ineffective solutions.

Decision-making

Ultimately, you will need to make a decision about how to solve problems that arise. At times (and with industry experience), you may be able to make a decision quickly. Solid research and analytical skills can help those who have less experience in their field. There may also be times when it is appropriate to take some time to craft a solution or escalate the issue to someone more capable of solving it.

Communication

When identifying possible solutions, you will need to know how to communicate the problem to others. You will also need to know what communication channels are the most appropriate when seeking assistance. Once you find a solution, communicating it clearly will help reduce any confusion and make implementing a solution easier.

Dependability

Dependability is one of the most important skills for problem-solvers. Solving problems in a timely manner is essential. Employers highly value individuals they can trust to both identify and then implement solutions as fast and effectively as possible.

How to improve your problem-solving skills

There are several methods you can use to improve your problem-solving skills. Whether you are searching for a job or currently working, improving your problem-solving skills and associated abilities will help make you a strong candidate and employee.

- **Acquire more technical knowledge in your field.** Depending on your industry, it may be easier to solve problems if you have a strong working technical knowledge. You can gain more technical knowledge through additional coursework, training or practice.
- **Seek out opportunities to solve problems.** By putting yourself into new situations, you are more likely to be exposed to opportunities to solve problems. You may find there are opportunities to volunteer for new projects in your current role, on another team or outside the workplace for another organisation.
- **Do practice problems.** Practice and role-play can be useful tools when learning to develop your problem-solving skills. You can find professional practice books for your industry and problem-solving

scenarios online. Practice how you might solve those problems and determine if your potential solutions are viable.

For example, in customer service, you might find a scenario like, “How would you handle an angry customer?” or “How do you respond when a customer asks for a refund?” Practicing how you might handle these or other scenarios common in your industry can help you call upon solutions quickly when they arise on the job.

- **Observe how others solve problems.** You may have colleagues who are skilled problem solvers. Observing how those colleagues solve problems can help you improve your own skills. If possible, ask one of your more experienced colleagues if you can observe their techniques. Asking relevant questions can be helpful in applying them in your own career.

How to highlight problem-solving skills

Showcasing your problem-solving skills on your resume and cover letter can help employers quickly understand how you might be of value to their team. You might consider only showcasing problem-solving skills on your resume if it is particularly relevant to the position you’re applying for. Customer service, engineering and management positions, for example, would be good candidates for including problem-solving abilities.

Problem-solving skills for resume

On your resume, you can highlight your problem-solving skills in several locations: The “skills” section, the “achievements” section and by giving specific examples of problem-solving in your “experience” section.

In the skills section, you may want to list key problem-solving skills that you possess instead of simply writing down the more generic term “problem-solving”. For example, you could list specific technical skills you possess that would help you solve problems or soft skills associated with problem-solving such as your research abilities or decision-making talents.

Remember, stories are powerful. Keep specific examples in mind of times you solved a problem. This is not only useful on your resume but will also help you answer interview questions like, “Tell me about a time you overcame an obstacle.”

Problem-solving skills for cover letter

Your cover letter is also an excellent opportunity to elaborate on your problem-solving skills. Here, you can give a brief example of a time you solved a problem successfully.

Alternatively, you might identify a challenge that this potential employer is seeking to solve and explain how you would address it.

Related: 7 Powerful Ways to Start a Cover Letter

For example, if a job posting mentions that the company is looking for someone to help improve their social media presence, you can identify ways you might aid in increasing awareness of the brand through various social media platforms.

Your problem-solving skills will be a benefit to you in every step of your career. From resume to application, interview to job duties, the ability to solve problems effectively as they arise will make you a valuable asset on the job and a highly sought after candidate.